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# ENGLISH ESSAY, PRÉCIS & COMPOSITION

Guess Paper  
for  
CSS-2021



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## ENGLISH ESSAY

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# **CAN THE COVID-19 CRISIS TRIGGER DEMISE OF GLOBALIZATION OR HURTLE A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN WORLD ORDER?**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Globalization prior to COVID-19 pandemic
- (c) Economic impacts of COVID-19 on globalization
  - (i) Economic growth report
  - (ii) Globalization and integration of economic institutions
  - (iii) Performance and plight of travel industry
  - (iv) Social impact of COVID-19 on globalization
- (c) Globalization and social indicators
- (d) Role of humanitarian organizations
- (e) Role of education
- (f) Globalization and world politics
- (g) Change in Global Order?

## **ESSAY**

The global COVID-19 pandemic has shaken firmly entrenched foundations of globalization and cut deep fissures in world order. The morbidity and mortality caused by the pandemic has raised huge concerns for the survival of globalization and world order. It has huge implications for economy, health and survival of poor nations. The decline in economic trade, shrinking of economies, and dismemberment of key travel and trade linkages among various states is being touted as an end to the era of globalization. There has been speculation and clamour over US government's poor handling of the pandemic citing it as significant evidence that its role as a superpower has waned. Meanwhile, China seems to have emerged as a more powerful state in containing the virus at home in record time. There have been some broad changes in the response of global markets toward the pandemic indicating that there is a glimmer of hope in the idea of globalization. Meanwhile, China has significantly increased its clout in world affairs as it provided medical and technical support to several African countries. With changes in the air, countries having gone into lockdowns and emerging back, it remains to be seen whether globalization would be derailed or would change in a novel way. US may have had a bad day in controlling the pandemic at domestic level but it seems far-fetched to predict whether it has waned to the extent of playing second fiddle to China.

The phenomenon of globalization is a string of ideas embedded and intermeshed to support global economy and trade among world nations. It is based on the value of economic interdependence through trade, creation of manufactured products, import and export of raw and semi-prepared raw material, interconnectivity among countries through road, rail and air travel, electronic real time communication through cellular and Internet technology, economic integration through integrated and interconnected banking system, and a universally agreed system of tariffs to harmonize trade imbalances and advantages. Prior to the spread of COVID-19 pandemic world economy was growing at a conservative rate of 2 percent annual growth rate. It



seems a remote possibility that work of two laborious centuries, various institutions and economic paradigms to achieve a highly integrated and interdependent global world would be done away with a whimper.

How threatening has been the COVID-19 pandemic to the world economy and prospects of globalization? In the reports released in June 2020 the World Bank pasted a grim headline about the prospects of world economy. It predicted that world economy would shrink by more than 5.2 percent in the year 2020 and could plunge into worst recession since World War II. There have been various predictions about the asymmetric effects of the pandemic on different countries. The spread of virus among the developed countries has led to more health issues and loss of employment. The trajectory of the pandemic suggests that most poor countries have been soared its onslaught. Major victims so far are developed countries despite the presence of good health care systems in shape and placement. According to recent conservative estimates, developed countries could shrink by 7 percent whereas the developing countries could shrink by three. However, the developed countries still find themselves better off as they have the financial muscles to resuscitate their economies.

Economic growth prospects have been estimated in the World Bank report showing different trends that could predict the revival of global economy. East Asia and Pacific region is projected to grow at half percent, South Asia could see a contraction of 2.7 percent in 2020 and Europe and Central Asia a contraction of 4.7 percent. It has been estimated that around 80 million people could lose their jobs. Unemployment, social and economic assistance would aggravate as income gaps widen and health budgets get disrupted. As many as 3 billion people could be indirectly affected by the pandemic. Public health expenditures would skyrocket and countries would have to embrace tough economic decisions.

The pandemic has led to lockdowns, demand drought and lack of investment leading to rapid decline in international monetary flows unprecedented in modern history. Rough forecast show 13-32 percent decline in merchandise trade, a 30-40 percent reduction in foreign direct investment, and a 44-80 percent drop in international airline passengers in the year 2020. As one critic has rightly noted that these numbers imply a major rollback of globalization's recent gains, but they do not signal a fundamental collapse of international market integration. The data on imports and exports shows that a demand recession would not stay for long. The exports could drop to year 2000 level stifling demand but by no means has it spelled doom for globalization. Integrated notional markets won't flounder in the wake of this pandemic. Banking system would remain steadfast to pounce on any opportunity of economic revival as soon as the pandemic shows signs of easing. Foreign direct investment (FDI) could shrink by as much as 38 percent. But a decrease in FDI doesn't leave the idea of globalization dead. It dries out the stakes of investing countries in other stakeholders but doesn't threaten disintegration.

Globalization has been an intricate phenomenon entailing cooperation among economic institutions of the world. Banks and other financial institutions have remained interconnected and responded responsibly in the fight against the global pandemic. Key economic institutions and forums such as World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank, World Economic Forum (WEF) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have looked at the trends in economic activity and proposed several policy measures to countries to keep their economies afloat. They have rightly recognized that the demand and supply chains have been distorted. Countries have liquidity and debt issues which could speed toward default. Debt waivers and tariff reduction modalities have been discussed. In these trying circumstances, poor countries have been given their debt relief and necessary fund arrangements have also been made to keep countries afloat on liquidity.

Airline industry has borne the biggest brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic along with the conventional travelling modes. Almost all countries of the world initially imposed domestic and international travel restrictions to curb the spread of virus. Keeping in view the fact that travel and tourism generate business opportunities, the year 2020 could only be remembered as a tragedy. There has been a 90 percent decline in air travel and in countries where travel restrictions were lenient around 60 percent of passenger seats were vacant during a flight. Similarly, intra and inter-city transport has been hit hard by lockdowns and public transport restrictions. Although public transport has reopened but the volume of passengers has decreased significantly. Work on regional and trans-regional road and rail connectivity issues has stalled. This has been a huge setback

for several economies. However, it doesn't signal a breakdown of economic, social or political linkages. Neither does it upend the conception of integrated national and international markets.

Globalization is highly dependent on integrated communication technologies such as cellular communication and Internet connectivity. Before the start of pandemic it was already being argued that data is the new gold. Countries were vouching for more mobile density and subsidized use of Internet to increase connectivity, e-commerce and online trade. It was on cards to provide Internet connectivity to around 4 billion people of the world. Businesses were getting reoriented to make their presence on mobile apps and Internet clouds to save their data and carry on swift business transactions. The pandemic though a game changer for almost all sectors of the economy, has stirred a drive to reinvent and reorganize business models. Many businesses have revamped their working styles and included work from home facility for their employees and gave more online connectivity to their customers for business retention and expansion.

One of the few big threats to globalization has been the loss of employment among immigrants working in different countries. The fallout of unemployment among immigrants is serious as it contains two critical threats. Firstly it creates a vacuum in the skilled labour market. Secondly it doesn't give opportunity to the laid off worker to seek a job replacement in its country of origin as the skills of the worker may not be required over there. This case scenario creates more dependency in the country of origin and adds to poverty and disturbance of livelihood. The International Labour Organization has estimated that as many as 80 million migrant workers could be economically displaced due to the pandemic. This should be a grave cause of concern for many countries as immigrants are source of earning foreign remittance for their countries. This would adversely affect flow of precious foreign exchange reserves of many countries.

Poverty, health and education are global issues which contribute to the survival of globalization. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives of more than a billion people. A survey showed that during the initial days of lockdown in February 2020, more than three billion people were locked up in their homes. The opportunity cost to stay at home and save life or to get out and make an earning cannot be calculated in these extraordinary times. It can be argued that globalization has caused income disparity among the rich and poor nations. It may have added to poverty. But it can also be argued that for the first time access to travel, capital, aid and health care have helped in alleviating poverty. Several humanitarian organizations have teamed up to help destitute and impoverished populations fight chronic poverty. Sustained efforts have been made to provide health facilities to the most remote areas and populations of the world. These humanitarian organizations have been helping poor nations fight poverty. The realization that poverty needs to be alleviated at all costs during this pandemic has not been lost on these humanitarian organizations. United Nations, UNICEF, Bill Gates Foundation, etc. have teamed up to provide much needed efforts for poverty and health. Poverty and health are given equal importance as large segments of poor population in developing countries are embroiled in poverty and lack good health and nutrition facilities. With fear of breakdown of food chains, hunger and health have acquired key role in fight to ward off the pandemic. It still remains to be seen where globalization would be reversed due to pandemic induced poverty and health crisis.

Humanitarian organizations have stressed the need to protect vulnerable populations, in particular people with pre-existing health conditions, older persons, and other people at risk of COVID-19 including health professionals. They have emphasized protection of health workers and other relevant frontline workers, especially women who represent the majority of the health work-force as well as persons with disabilities, children and adolescents and people in vulnerable situations. This attitude signifies that international cooperation and integration is not doomed in the wake of the corona pandemic.

Education sector is reeling from the pernicious effects of COVID-19 pandemic. This sector helps in exchange of knowledge, skills, training and services. It also brings investment, human capital and foreign exchange. Most of the countries worse hit by the pandemic have closed their educational institutes. Earlier this sector always played a significant role in helping integrate economic regions and nationalities. The tenets of globalization are under severe stress due to disruption of educational activities. But it can be argued that major schools, colleges and universities have tried to reorient their teaching calendar. Educational activities have been disturbed but they have not been called off.



Globalization is inextricably linked to world politics which is also dependent on economic, social and political cooperation. Even in the worst time during the pandemic crisis, international cooperation and trust has not taken a back seat. Globalization is based on the notion of integrated participation of states. Many political issues, conflicts and cross-border disputes are still being addressed through forums of multilateral organizations. It would not be possible to abandon cooperation in favour of isolation and move head on without any mediators.

The global order may undergo some changes in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic but it would not give any single country competitive advantage against the other. It has been speculated that global order may tilt toward China as it succeeded in containing the pandemic whereas US failed to take any credible steps to curb the pandemic at home. It has also been highlighted that US has accounted for the most COVID-19 cases and fatalities in the world. The US failed to act decisively against the pandemic and it couldn't play a leadership role at global level to lead from the front. Instead the US remained adamant that the pandemic was a Chinese construct and World Health Organization (WHO) had failed utterly to contain the pandemic spread. A war of words also ensued between US and China with US calling the COVID-19 a Chinese virus holding China squarely responsible for the entire crisis.

Some critics have argued that the US response to press the COVID-19 issue at international forums has been ambivalent and irresponsible. It has alienated its European allies and failed to extend any meaningful support to them. It has got the most clout in the United Nations, WTO and IMF but it failed to forge a joint struggle by keeping all states on board. This clearly leads to the conclusion that US still thinks it to be an isolated power shy of playing an interventionist role. This is also a significant departure from its track record to arrogate any strategic regional or international interest as its national interest.

If the role of China is contrasted with the US in fighting the pandemic, it can be seen that it played a better role in containing the virus and coming out openly to help other countries control the spread of virus. It initially held on to information and imposed a strict lockdown. Thereafter, it turned to its allies and offered them crucial advice and humanitarian assistance. It now sees in the pandemic crisis an opportunity to gain influence over other states through humanitarian gestures. It has energized its diplomatic machinery to build liaison with affected countries and reach out to them, especially the African countries. It has generously donated protective gears, masks and ventilators.

Presently, it cannot be predicted that who would get the better share of global power after the pandemic. The struggle against the pandemic is far from over and would require more sustained efforts and seriousness. The US is still the largest economy in terms of GDP, financial muscles and technological prowess. Its military and technology superiority is far ahead of any other nation in the world. China may win more allies and international cooperation but there is limit to its power and influence. It would be foolhardy to predict that China can outclass US and take over as the new leader of the world.

The pandemic is an undesirable crisis which threatens to reverse gains made in achieving globalization and preserving equilibrium in global order. Slowdown in economic activities and travel has currently jolted global markets and supply chains. But novel methods and measures based on social distancing and use of technology has enabled countries to remain afloat economically. Admittedly, world economy has entered a phase of recession but it would rebound swiftly once the pandemic is over. Moreover, there is considerable hope that economies would reorient themselves and demand would pick up rapidly. A change in global order is possible but won't be of great significance as US is the largest economy in the world. It still enjoys largest clout in international organizations. It therefore seems that globalization would stay without any significant change in global order.

# **PAKISTAN'S CHALLENGES AT DOMESTIC AND EXTERNAL FRONT DURING THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Spread and threat of coronavirus
  - (i) Pakistan initial response and efforts against corona
  - (ii) Half-hearted attempts to spread corona awareness
  - (iii) Poor health care system
  - (iv) Healthcare moving toward emergency mode
- (c) Role of NCOC in struggle against corona
- (d) Multi-pronged strategy against corona
- (e) Corona effects
  - (i) Issues of healthcare
  - (ii) Changes in healthcare
  - (iii) Poor plight of economy
  - (iv) Decline in trade and commerce
  - (v) Delay in execution of projects
  - (vi) External challenges posed by corona
  - (vii) Threat to education system
  - (viii) Issues of urbanization and spread of coronavirus
  - (ix) Labour and employment issues
  - (x) Slow movement on resolution of bilateral issues
- (f) Government efforts in fight against corona
  - (i) IT initiatives by the government
  - (ii) Social and economic protection initiatives
- (g) Appraisal of lockdown
- (h) Government performance and preparedness
- (i) Conclusion

## **ESSAY**

The global COVID-19 pandemic has made significant impact on Pakistan. It has unsparingly affected all walks of its life and confronted it with new teething challenges. It has overstressed health care, brought economy to a grinding halt, disrupted educational activities and led to painful rise in unemployment. It has cut across the various fault lines among state institutions and performance of the government. It has frustrated governance and reform efforts of the government at several levels. The economy was already reeling from sluggish growth and painful IMF structural adjustments. Double digit inflation was ravaging savings and



investments. Imports were on the decline but exports were still stagnating due to lack of foreign investment and rupee depreciation. In the wake of this pandemic which has swept rural and urban centres across the country, nothing less than a calamity, sustained efforts at multiple fronts are required to stop its spread and evaluate its ravages. Various steps need to be taken in tandem to cull the scourge of its exponential rise. Information dissemination, strict implementation of social distancing laws and living with the new normal ought to be encouraged among the population. The trend and spike in its spread and traceability have not been gauged enough to predict at what time it would be eradicated. Lack of adequate testing and voluntary sample testing of different hotspots in urban areas have eluded epidemiologists and remain formidable challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic has become a ubiquitous global affair now. There would be few countries where its spread has been prevented from becoming life threatening. Pakistan hasn't been spared from its wrath. Corona cases have surpassed the count of 330,000 patients in the entire country. Its spread is alarming and contagious as it is acquired through inhaling virus laden air or contact with moisture. Initially, many countries tried to slow the spread of virus through various precautionary measures such as social distancing, ban on air travel and public transport, mandatory mask wearing in public spheres, alternate work shift in industry to achieve isolation, remote work routine and lockdowns. Despite these precautionary measures the spread of the COVID-19 has shown no signs of abating. Lately, some countries have reduced fatalities and virus contract from its spread through rigorous testing and prevention. Experts have debated that the viral pandemic has hurt developed and developing countries alike. However, given the weak infrastructure and health care systems of many developing countries, the viral onslaught has unearthed various asymmetries and poorly coordinated response. In case of Pakistan's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic matters, response and effort of the government leave a lot to be desired.

Pakistan's initial efforts and response towards the COVID-19 crisis paint a dismal picture. Its initial response toward the crisis was of denial, lack of seriousness and unpreparedness. It failed to recognize that the pandemic was going to work against economy, healthcare and education sectors. Various factors played a crucial role in embracing the gravity of the situation. This failure has had pernicious repercussions for the entire country.

The COVID-19 pandemic is real and could stay for as long as the infections are brought down and people recover. It has taken immense efforts to convince a population which has various literate and semi-literate strands scattered among the various urban and rural areas about the severity and threat imposed by the pandemic crisis. Questions and conspiracy theories surfaced with infodemics about the existence of the virus and its fatality. Many people shrugged aside the existence of the coronavirus issue with plain dismissal arguing that they wouldn't be affected since they have good immunity and the virus was just a hoax. Some even contended that even if it existed, the threat was overblown. This mindset worked as a huge impediment in enforcing and instituting necessary precautionary measures among the masses. Critics have argued that government should have come up with more innovative thinking in convincing people to avoid the virus in novel ways. Government was already circulating messages on radio programmes, advertisements and through mobile written and verbal messages to inform about the virus. Some critics have lately suggested that mobile vans, volunteer placards and banners ought to have been utilized robustly to spread the message against the menacing contagion.

Pakistan's derelict health care system has suffered many a mortal blow during the COVID-19 crisis. It was already reeling from overwork, lack of staff and hospital facilities along with overstressed tertiary healthcare system. The pandemic has done immense disfavours to it by first overwhelming it with emergency patients scrambling for hospital beds. Secondly, it shifted focus away from critical health facilities much needed for a poverty-ridden population. In order to control corona cases many hospitals diverted staff and resources towards corona-related cases by establishing corona relief camps and quarantine centres. Outpatient departments and laboratories were closed. This created a dilemma for the government as it had to look towards not just corona patients but regular patients to these hospitals.

The healthcare system faced dire issues in the fight against corona at multiple levels. Initially, the country ran low on protective gear for doctors and paramedic along with ventilators for the critically ill corona patients. Another grave issue was to stop the spread of corona among the medical community tendering towards corona patients. Medical associations across the country made repeated calls for a complete lockdown to stifle the spread of corona virus. Their argument laid on the reason that they were not provided adequate

protective equipment, there was a critical shortage of staff and healthcare system was incapable to support such huge number of corona patients. Apart from this and the dearth of ventilators, supply of oxygen, pulse-oximeters and other connective paraphernalia was delayed. In order to coordinate efforts between national and provincial governments, National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) under the aegis of National Committee on COVID-19 was setup to monitor the activity of provincial health institutions and to report accurately on the number of corona cases in the country.

NCOC assumed the role of government's mouthpiece to deal with the corona outbreak. It initiated a three-pronged strategy to address social issues relating to dissemination of crucial information on the pandemic, coordinate efforts among the provinces and district governments and to cater to seamless provision of health facilities through import of life saving drugs, ventilators and other critical protective gear. It started with purchase of protective gear from abroad and procurement of life-saving drugs for corona patients. Prior to the corona pandemic there were less than 1500 ventilators in all hospitals of the country. NCOC coordinated the purchase of ventilators and protective gear and crucial life-saving drugs.

The government adopted a multi-pronged strategy to contain the spread of corona virus outbreak in the country. In the first step it imposed restrictions on intercity bus and air travel and closed all bus and railway stations. In the second step it imposed a lockdown in various cities grudgingly to break the spread of virus. It ordered close of major labour intensive industries which included retail trade, restaurants etc., shopping malls and made wearing of masks mandatory. In the third step it introduced several social distancing information drives communicated via Internet, newspapers, local banners and thorough mobile messages.

Domestic challenges have been augmented in the wake of coronavirus pandemic. One of these challenges comprises an overburdened, overstretched and understaffed public healthcare system. The situation has been aggravated for the doctors and paramedic staff in different ways. The number of patients affected with the corona virus is on the rise adding additional burden to a beleaguered health system. Prior to the corona pandemic in the country, the performance of the public health system was dismal. The primary, secondary and tertiary tiers of the healthcare system were inundated by patients. Many of the primary and secondary health facilities lacked trained paramedic staff or were low on necessary health facilities. This scenario always deflected more burden toward the tertiary care located in urban centres. Most of the primary healthcare facilities lacked any accident and emergency department with very few having an intensive and cardiac care units.

The corona pandemic has sought many changes in healthcare sector to curtail the spread of virus spread among various rural and urban centres. It has affected primary maternal and child care health by diverting the funds toward emergency services. Various studies have highlighted decline in health services in the primary healthcare centres. Instances of malnourishment, food shortages and lack of medicines have been reported which are severely affecting the primary healthcare system. The response of the government to this grave challenge has been unsatisfactory.

Economy has taken a brash drubbing by the corona outbreak. The government was ambivalent to impose a complete lockdown fearing that it would slowdown economic growth and lead to unemployment. It was argued by the government at the highest forums that a toxic mix of formal and large informal economy dependent on manual labour would be damaged irreversibly during a prolonged lockdown. Few industries could be given the luxury to close work at offices and start from remote places. That too could only be restricted to the IT sector which is not labour intensive. Construction and large scale manufacturing couldn't be kept close as it formed the bedrock of economy and drove the large retail and wholesale sector. But the effects of lockdown could be seen in the closing of several services-related businesses as demand declined and employment started to shrink. Many companies had to lower salaries in the first instance and in the next instance due to decline in revenue had to make undesirable lay-offs. The economy shrank domestically which registered a steep decline in GDP and tax revenue collection. Export orders remained blocked as global economy shrank and went for belt tightening to reduce household expenditure.

Domestic trade saw a demand drought during the initial days of the pandemic. It is still picking pace and trying to hold more ground. As inter-city transport services were suspended, trade and commerce started to lose steam. As per an estimate Pakistan lost more than 10 trillion in domestic trade. This meant that unemployment has been aggravated with more than half a million people without jobs. It wreaked havoc with the plight of daily wagers employed in the construction, retail and wholesale sectors. It created income disparity and pushed the



population further toward abject poverty. Policymakers found themselves in a dilemma where opening up the economy was tantamount to accepting a slow and painful death. Whereas continuing with the lockdown meant an exponential growth in unemployment and poverty.

Delay in execution of development and CPEC related projects during the pandemic has slowed GDP growth, led to unemployment and increased the cost of doing business. Many allied small and medium businesses have been brought to the level of extinction as they ran short on capital, reimbursement and new project openings. Reportedly, work on several CPEC related projects remained stalled for over more than two months. Pakistan lost more than \$1.2 billion in investment projects during this pandemic crisis.

External challenge posed by the corona pandemic is also multidimensional. It has created an economic crisis of unprecedented level as large number of overseas Pakistani expatriates lost jobs. This surge in unemployment among overseas Pakistanis has in turn led to an acute decline in foreign remittances. Apart from this economic crisis, a huge humanitarian crisis is unfolding as expatriate overseas Pakistanis return back. The economic conditions in market are dreadful for these skilled workers as most of them cannot be absorbed in the domestic job market either due to closure on hiring or their skill is not required in the job market. Many local families have staked their sustenance and dependence on Pakistanis living abroad. The situation seems nothing short of a catastrophe.

The corona crisis has bedevilled education sector which constitutes among the biggest service sectors of the economy. The public education sector of the four provinces forms the largest bureaucracy in the provinces. Collectively, the provincial education bureaucracies are responsible for educating more than 80 million children of different age brackets. The collective education budget of the four provinces is more than Rs.800 billion. One of the most significant impacts of the pandemic has been fallout of the public education sector. It was previously grappling with high student drop-out rate, absenteeism and lack of teaching facilities. This public schooling model was based on physical presence in the class and bereft of any modern teaching pedagogy or methodology. The corona pandemic has severely pushed the literacy and education project and aim of these public schools backwards. The children studying in public schools can ill afford to buy any gadgets and internet connection that could help them acquire tuition at home. On the contrary, the private educational institutes in urban areas have kept the curriculum and calendar year going without any blockage. Lack of adequate internet and infrastructure facilities to children and students enrolled in the public and low tier private schools would lead to wastage of precious time.

Pakistan is among the fastest urbanizing countries among the developed countries. Although its economy has shown sluggish growth rates during the last three financial years, yet it has managed to attract a large work-force toward the urban centres. Several issues of urbanization such as migration, labour and employment availability, expanding settlements, health and trade prospects have taken a back seat. The corona pandemic has often been touted as an urban affair and events so far suggest that it would not be eradicated since social distancing or safety precautions remain unobserved. A fact check would make it clear that majority of economic activity takes place in large urban sectors. This has resulted in increasing corona cases in the urban centres as compared to the rural sectors.

Labour and employment across the rural and urban sectors has been adversely affected during the corona pandemic. A large proportion of labour force is employed in the agriculture (59 percent), services (17 percent), manufacturing (12 percent) and construction sectors (25 percent) of the economy. These sectors employ literate, semi-literate and daily wage labourers. Lack of literacy, awareness and following of necessary precautions pervades in the daily work routine of the labour force. Since these economic sectors operate and concentrate more in the urban areas of the country, therefore, spread and control of corona cases in these urban centres is a bigger concern.

Slow pace of diplomacy, non-resolution of issues among states, and trade cooperation have been some big casualties during the corona virus pandemic. Bilateral issues between India and Pakistan have been pushed back and Afghan peace process hangs in limbo. It has been asserted at various national and international platforms that peace can be won through cooperation and coordination. Specifically in case of Pakistan-India dispute, the corona pandemic has pushed talks even farther than planned earlier. Meanwhile, India has unleashed terror in the Indian Held Kashmir (IHK) by imposing lockdowns and holding the entire Kashmir valley to siege. Crossborder trade, travel and projects initiated lag behind schedules and many have been shelved considering no end in sight against the corona.

Government has undertaken many laudable steps to prevent the spread of corona virus through a Nationally Coordinated Operations Centre (NCOC). Core issues in containing the spread of the virus were identified as: creation of a safety net to support people who have been hit badly due to job lay-offs or closure of informal retail and wholesale economy, dissemination of information on precaution and prevention, augmenting the resources in hospitals, and strict implementation of social distancing laws. The NCOC broadcasts public service messages to reduce the spread of corona virus. It airs these public service messages through mobile calls, tunes and has launched hotline contact numbers on which doctors can be approached and their opinion is sought on any suspicion or symptoms related to coronavirus. It has launched several IT initiatives and other social safety initiatives to provide guidance and general public information. Presently, more than a dozen initiatives have been launched.

The IT initiatives launched by the government to spread awareness and information regarding the corona virus include a real-time app called Pak Nagehban backed by a resource control that helps in locating the availability of nearby hospitals which have beds, ventilators, and COVID-19 treatment facilities. A national hotline and tele-health portal have been launched to assist in corona relief work. Integrated Disease Information Management System (IDIMS) has been developed by National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) which forms the national repository for all COVID related data. IDIMS is integrated with all provincial health systems for near real-time data exchange. The system forms the basis for advance data analytics for disease projections and identification of smart lockdowns.

Social and economic protection has been highly prioritised by the government to give community protection through volunteer service and economic aid. A voluntary Corona Relief Tiger Relief Force has been formed to help poor people in the lockdown areas and reach out to people in those areas where economic activity has dried out resulting in food shortages and loss in employment. A Prime Minister Corona Relief Fund has been established to help people through voluntary contributions. Government launched Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme to help despondent people through cash transfer. An estimated Rs.1.5 trillion would be disbursed through this programme. Moreover, an overseas Pakistani and private partnership has been launched to pool funds for supporting fight against corona.

How well has been the decision to impose the lockdown received? A half-hearted and unprepared lockdown was imposed for a period of over two weeks which was ultimately lifted on the pretext of getting the economy back on its heels. It was unprepared because the country didn't capitalize on testing to trace viral carriers. Moreover, it didn't increase its testing capacity and floundered aimlessly. It flirted with the idea of herd immunity among the population. The opportunity to trace and prevent the spread of virus was missed. It has also been argued that government immediately couldn't do anything as a cash economy and contact based social and economic system couldn't be wished away. A vast illiterate society which has hardly any awareness about health issues, lives in abject poverty or in large extended families in rural areas, has no idea or concern with any health awareness. The issue of coronavirus outbreak was dismissed as an urban phenomenon on the plea that most of the infections were in urban areas. This lack of awareness among people in urban and rural areas created serious hurdles in the control of the virus spread.

An honest appraisal of government efforts in controlling the coronavirus transmission needs to be made keeping in view the damage it avoided and the places where it failed miserably. The list of failure of the federal and provincial governments has been the usual suspect: distrust in government efforts to mitigate the corona virus and questioning the narrative about the severity of the corona virus pandemic. Since an unseen virus was in the air which could be transmitted through a sneeze or water droplets, not many people were willing to entertain the truth about its existence. The government failed to convince people that contagiousness and mortality due to the viral attack would place the dilapidated health system of the country under critical strain. The country by no means could bear the extra burden of hordes of patients coming to emergency wards of public hospitals.

The fight against corona pandemic is a long-haul. One thing that can be credited to the government is its sincerity in waging a passionate struggle against the scourge of coronavirus. It started clumsily with denial and dismissals. Some near victories also include the impartial struggle in maintaining a joint venture among the provinces to coordinate and share information. The political scramble between the federal and Sindh government has only aggravated efforts to fight corona. Joint work among provinces needs to be coordinated to revive the economy, inject capital in various economic sectors through cash flow, grant waivers and tax exemptions to businesses, increase employment and maintain mandatory social distancing.



# **CPEC AS A GAME CHANGER FOR PAKISTAN: OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS**

## **Thesis Statement**

CPEC project between Pakistan and China presents a unique opportunity to both countries to exploit potential in areas of energy, infrastructure, and social development. Under the umbrella of CPEC, investment exceeding US\$50 billion would be made in Pakistan. It has the seeds to change regional dynamics, extend regional connectivity and provide access to external financial markets. It is high time that implementation of policies favourable to participation of population for their economic benefit be undertaken.

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Pakistan to step into Chinese shoes in difficult economic situation
- (c) CPEC as a flagship BRI project
- (d) Opportunity under the CPEC
  - (i) CPEC Infrastructure coverage
  - (ii) CPEC Energy and ICT projects
  - (iii) CPEC Railways project
  - (iv) CPEC provincial projects
  - (v) CPEC Special Economic Zones (SEZs)
  - (vi) CPEC Industrial Parks and Social Sector Development
  - (vii) Division of Economic Zones as per CPEC
  - (viii) Investment in Gwadar
- (e) Advantages of CPEC cooperation
  - (i) CPEC to boost economic growth
  - (ii) Diversification of economic activities
  - (iii) Prosperity through partnership and inclusiveness
  - (iv) Market-oriented growth and cooperation
- (f) Challenges to CPEC
  - (i) Consultations to remove differences on implementation of different projects
  - (ii) Transparency and audit of the projects
  - (iii) Building consensus among provinces and political parties
  - (iv) Increase in integration for planning
  - (v) Slow pace of business reforms
  - (vi) Building of investment friendly climate
  - (vii) Limitation of skilled labour
  - (viii) Creation of opportunities for employment
  - (ix) Grievance of Balochistan against CPEC project
  - (x) Intervention of NAB



- (xi) Indian challenge to CPEC
- (xii) Chahbahar Port and Indian Investment
- (xiii) Geopolitical and security risks
- (xiv) US and its opposition to CPEC
- (xv) Debt trap in CPEC?
- (xvi) Asset seizures in case of default on paying loans
- (g) Suggestions
  - (i) Creation of CPEC Authority
  - (ii) Rationalization of Tax incentives
  - (iii) Amendments in SEZs Act of 2012
- (h) Conclusion

## ESSAY

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative launched in 2013 by the Chinese President Xi Jinping. It connects mainland China with Pakistan by straddling across the length and breadth of Pakistan. These are testing times for Pakistan as regional power equations are changing rapidly. On its western front, the Afghan issue has become a flashpoint as USA is desperate to exit after an occupation of more than two decades. On its eastern front, tensions are soaring high due to brutal repression of Kashmiri people by the Indian government. The economic growth has declined to 2.8 percent annually in the last financial year ending in June 2019. The country recently contracted an IMF bailout package to resolve its balance of payments crisis since exports have been less than imports. The energy demand of the country has increased manifold and would further expand if goals of economic growth need to be realized. Foreign direct investment had been facing a dry spell for the last few years. Serious issues pertaining to capacity building of labour need to be addressed urgently and generation of employment needs to be prioritized. In these circumstances, CPEC is a silver lining that could ameliorate economic conditions and push Pakistan back toward a growth trajectory.

In the last four decades China has been successful in lifting about 800 million people out of poverty through economic reforms, a sustainable growth and industrial development. It is an illustrious example that Pakistan needs to follow for a growth trajectory. Prior to the launch of CPEC project, Pakistan faced energy shortages, transport infrastructure issues, decline in foreign direct investment (FDI), poor investment climate and a closed ended economy. It approached IMF to resolve its balance of payments crisis. A tough IMF plan that invokes stabilization and major overhaul of the revenue generation is currently underway. As a result, economic growth has slowed down as government has been tasked to reduce import and frivolous expenditure. It needs to emulate the Chinese growth model to rekindle its flagging economic growth. Therefore, CPEC is a high time opportunity if Pakistan wants to climb on the bandwagon of rapidly growing countries.

Initially, CPEC would serve as the pilot project of the Belt and Road Initiative. The experience gained from the execution of projects under the umbrella would be shared with other countries through which other BRI corridors pass. It will provide strategic gains for Pakistan, increase policy coordination between China and Pakistan. Pakistan stands out to gain from this project due to its geographical proximity to China. It would gain immensely from infrastructure connectivity; closely coordinated economic and trade strategies that would help realize unimpeded trade; interdependence in trade and would attract in investment and financing, financial integration would become easier; strengthen all-weather strategic friendship between the two countries and enable in building lasting people-to-people bond.

CPEC is one of the largest bilateral investment projects undertaken by the Chinese government under the BRI. It is one of the leg projects of BRI which envisions China's grand economic design to connect the historical silk route across mainland Europe and Asia with the help of six land corridors. It is

based on major collaborative projects for infrastructure construction, industrial development and livelihood improvement, aimed at socio-economic development, prosperity and security in regions along it. It is a strategic investment for Pakistan and China. The investment exceeds US\$50 billion in which 34 billion would go towards energy projects, US\$10 billion on infrastructure and rest of the seed amount would be spent on social development projects. The early harvest projects initiated in the first leg of the CPEC worth US\$18.9 billion are underway in Pakistan.

CPEC would act as a catalyst in regional connectivity. It would provide connectivity to China and Pakistan. It will give China access to the Arabian Sea through Gwadar which will significantly promote Chinese trade with countries in the Middle East, Africa and many countries in Europe. Furthermore, it will offer transit trade facility to the land-locked Afghanistan and the Central Asian states. It covers China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the whole territory of Pakistan. In order to reflect the level, scope and layout of the construction and development of the Corridor, its coverage is divided into the core zone and the radiation zone. There are five road and three rail infrastructure projects in the CPEC. The road infrastructure would add 966 kilometres of roads and the rail road would add 1810 kilometres to the existing networks. The road infrastructure connectivity is divided into core zone and the radiation zone.

The CPEC's core zone and the radiation zone, presents the spatial layout of "one belt, three axes and several passages". By "one belt" we mean the belt area composed of the core zone of the CPEC, including Kashgar, Tumshuq city, and Atushi city and Akto county in Kizilsu Kirghiz autonomous prefecture of Xinjiang, China, as well as Islamabad, parts of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The core zone contains nodes which form the main routes of infrastructure. The node cities that the corridor passes through include Kashgar, Atushi, Tumshuq, Shule, Shufu, Akto, Tashkurgan Tajik, Gilgit, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Islamabad, Lahore, Multan, Quetta, Sukkur, Hyderabad, Karachi and Gwadar. The "three axes" refer to three horizontal axes connecting Lahore and Peshawar, Sukkur and Quetta, and Karachi and Gwadar. The "several passages" refer to several railways and highway trunk lines from Islamabad to Karachi and Gwadar.

Major CPEC projects are in Energy sector. Presently, there are energy priority, actively promoted and potential energy projects. Around 21 energy projects which range from development of wind farms, extension of transmission line for up gradation of the transmission infrastructure and hydro electric stations and installation of coal-fired plants are under this scheme. There are Information and Communication Technology (ICT) projects under the umbrella of CPEC. These include Cross Border Optical Fibre Cable, Pilot Project of Digital Terrestrial Multimedia Broadcast (DTMB), Early Warning System (EWS), and Pakistan Meteorological Department.

Railways based connectivity is via CPEC Rail Based Mass Transit Projects which is divided into Karachi Circular Railway, Greater Peshawar Region Mass Transit, Quetta Mass Transit, and Orange Line Lahore. It is an appreciable step in the revival of the Railways of Pakistan. Approximately 1810 km of rail infrastructure would be updated.

CPEC new provincial projects include a variety of road, water supply, and mining projects. These projects would be executed at Ketu Bunder Sea Port Development Project, Naukundi-Mashkhel-Panjgur Road project connecting with M-8 and N-85, Chitral CPEC link road from Gilgit, Shandor, Chitral to Chakdara, Mirpur-Muzaffarabad-Mansehra Road construction for connectivity with CPEC route, Quetta Water Supply Scheme from Pat-feeder Canal, Balochistan, Iron Ore Mining, Processing & Steel Mills complex at Chiniot, Punjab.

Building of special economic zones is the economic concept to take full advantage of CPEC project. It aims at harnessing the potential of the infrastructure connectivity that would help in fanning out special economic zones near the road and rail projects. Moreover, the building of special economic zones would also benefit from the energy corridors built in different regions. Nine SEZs would be built which include Rashakai Economic Zone, M-1, Nowshera. China Special Economic Zone Dhabeji, Bostan Industrial Zone, Allama Iqbal Industrial City (M-3), Faisalabad, ICT Model Industrial Zone, Islamabad,



Industrialization is the key feature of CPEC project. It holds the promise of Development of Industrial Park on Pakistan Steel Mills Land at Port Qasim near Karachi; Special Economic Zone at Mirpur, AJK; Mohmand Marble City; Moqpondass SEZ Gilgit-Baltistan. Its Social Sector Development projects provide people to people exchanges, transfer of knowledge in different sectors, establishment of Pakistan Academy of Social Sciences, transfer of knowledge in education sector through consortium of business schools.

The CPEC is divided into five functional zones from north to south: Xinjiang foreign economic zone, northern border trade logistics and business corridor and ecological reserve, eastern and central plain economic zone, western logistics corridor business zone, and southern coastal logistics business zone. Most of the node cities (secondary link roads connecting with the major link roads), transportation corridors and industrial clusters are concentrated in them.

Investment in Gwadar is a key plank of the CPEC project. Projects have been planned for the development of are planned for the Gwadar East-Bay Expressway, New Gwadar International Airport, construction of breakwaters, dredging of berthing areas and channels, development of free zone, necessary facilities of fresh water treatment, water supply and distribution, Pak-China Friendship Hospital, Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute at Gwadar, Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan, Bao Steel Park, petrochemicals, stainless steel and other industries in Gwadar, development of Gwadar University (Social Sector Development), Gwadar Livelihood Project

China and Pakistan are blessed with different natural endowments, but they are unequal partners in trade. Both are at different stages of economic development, industrialization and urbanization. China is a highly industrialized country now and it has a highly valuable experience in infrastructure construction, high capacity in equipment manufacturing, iron and steel, and cement industries as well as financing for investment which can be utilized by Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan has a rich human and natural resources profile, immense potential for economic growth and broad market prospects besides a significant geostrategic location. The orderly execution of CPEC projects and planning to exploit economic factors would work to the advantage of both countries.

The economic impact of CPEC is seen as potentially game changing for Pakistan. The current economic conditions of the country are not encouraging. The economy is under heavy stress of stabilization measures taken at the behest of a stringent IMF plan. With the precipitous slide of an overvalued rupee, and public finances straining at crippling deficits, prospect of Chinese-led investment growth is a boon for the strangulating economy. Economic woes are further compounded as it lacks the capacity to feed a burgeoning population. It is estimated that Chinese investment can potentially stimulate an 8 to 10 percent increase in Pakistan's GDP by 2030. However, none of the growth goal would be reachable if proper reforms are not undertaken.

Pakistan's economic woes are primarily rooted in its weak industrial prowess and capability to innovate and produce value-added goods. It has a very narrow export base that predominantly consists of textile, sports, surgical goods, leather and carpets. It exports less and imports more than the economy can sustain. It can utilize the CPEC opportunity to tap into the energy projects to boost its stagnant industry. It would have to go for diversification of its exports, invest in industrial development and produce high quality value-added goods. The CPEC energy and infrastructure projects would pave the way towards a better access to raw material markets, mining areas, mobilization and training of skilled labour. The extensions connecting main infrastructure roads under the CPEC would save time, fuel and precious energy.

The CPEC holds unique promise of cooperation and social uplift through exchange of commerce. It also caters to people to people contacts. Both countries shall jointly prepare plans; divide financing responsibilities based on the project situation and their respective investment and financing strength. They would cooperate for comparative advantage in project construction and implementation, and share fruits of their success with their people.

The Chinese and Pakistani governments have stakes in the projects initiated under the CPEC. They have also collaborated with Pakistani private industrial and services sector. It is an opportune time to move towards market-oriented growth and building of firm financial ecosystems. Chinese and Pakistani



economic systems are cordial in cooperation and should take stock of commercial projects related to the CPEC. These projects should inculcate the best practices that are prevalent in the industry that augments public-private partnership. Under these projects government should prioritize commercial projects concerning people's livelihood and provide them with equal opportunity and participation chances.

Setting clear goals for inclusive planning at the federal, provincial and grassroots levels should be a top priority for the government. However, this seems missing due to lack of parliamentary oversight and exhaustive debate; several misgivings are doing the rounds. It has been alleged that the Senate committee on CPEC is playing its role by taking the provinces on board on implementation of CPEC projects. The intricacies of multiple languages and ethnicities, imbalance between distribution of population, natural resources and power among the provinces and within the provinces often find expression in a huge traditional and social media which can create confusions or communication gaps. A situation like this can raise question mark on the integrity and intentions of those who are in control of key policy and decision making. A lack of engagement and consultation with the local population while planning and executing a project can create rifts between the local population and other stakeholders who are investing in mega projects. For example, in Gwadar, lack of consultations with the local fishermen in the building process of terminals and jetties that displace their livelihoods and boats has been a major cause for tensions. It is precisely this non-inclusion of local stakeholders that has hampered the transfer of knowledge and caused the failure in connecting nodes at the downstream institutional level.

Transparency, repayment terms, project costs are some of the concerns that need to be addressed urgently. It needs to be questioned whether the audit of CPEC projects would be conducted by federal audit departments or provincial. The involvement of Chinese companies, the concessions offered to them and their working with local Pakistani contractors and sub-contractors need to be more explicitly explained. However, there is a growing concern that provinces voice complaints either do so because of federal government's growing institutional opacity or simply because they want more of the pie.

In China, the Chinese Communist Party has devised the entire BRI project. Building consensus has not been a big issue for it. However, due to presence of multiple parties in Pakistan, the path to achieve consensus is not smooth. CPEC is a cross-Pakistan project that involves all of four provinces. Managing Pakistan's multi-party provincial structures and building bridges with all political parties is a teething challenge. To overcome this challenge of consensus building, China is engaging directly with several political parties at the provincial and federal level, to cultivate a better understanding of CPEC's vision and priorities. This process has culminated in the establishment of a CPEC Political Parties Joint Consultation Mechanism, which has seen the Communist Party of China engage with a broad spectrum of Pakistan's political parties.

CPEC is not a narrow one-party or one-province ambition. It requires consensus and cooperation at strategic levels of consensus building to ensure each province's stake in the project is protected and that Pakistan's government moves forward collaboratively. Since the political parties are committed to CPEC building consensus between them should be a top priority. However, the federal government's attempt at building political consensus between political parties has been poor because of the lack of transparency about CPEC between the different wings of government. There has been hardly any meaningful debate in the federal and provincial assemblies that could remove the prevailing confusion and concern. A joint working group of federal and provincial governments has been formed in Senate under chairmanship of senator Sherry Rehman but its performance has not been optimal to remove any iota of doubt about the benefits accruing to the provinces.

A grave challenge has been the government's capacity deficit to absorb concessionary loans and grants. The situation has been worsened by the inability to utilize these grants and concessionary loans. It is not known which projects would receive them and how these will be utilized in the future. There exists no integrated mechanism to simultaneously monitor projects by the federal and provincial governments. The Planning Commission at the federal level and provincial level are not linked with each other.

The pace of introduction of business reforms has been slow. Basic issues in clearing bank transactions, registering with the SECP and FBR erode the trust of investors. It is the responsibility of the federal and provincial governments to immediately introduce reforms. These business reforms should

include a one-window operation where representatives of different departments are working, system is integrated and the process is completed in a limited time. The operations of one-window should be fully integrated electronically so that no hassle is created for the investors. It is the responsibility of the federal government to effectively disseminate information about the economic impact of CPEC that provides a blueprint to the rest of the provinces to implement business reforms that can equip them with the right tools to benefit from CPEC.

Pakistan has the potential to attract huge Chinese investments if it develops better trade policies, offers tax incentives and fosters an investment-friendly climate. Currently to their disadvantage, investors are required to get multiple No Objection Certificates (NOCs) before investments can kick-start. Reforms aimed at decentralization and curbing bureaucratic controls remove impediments such as lengthy approvals, areas of overlapping jurisdiction and poorly coordinated regulatory authority. The case of launch of SEZs in other countries such as China, UAE, Thailand and Georgia is completely integrated as it offers a one-stop-service for all regulatory matters. In Pakistan, the Board of Investment (BoI) serves that purpose which, due to the lack of a tailor-made framework for SEZs, leads to bureaucratic red tape. Reforms should entail empowering and integrating provincial governments and federal government to make them interdependent regarding the application of SEZs to save time and money.

At the launch of CPEC it was stated that around 2 million jobs would be created in the economy. The rate of unemployment would decline from 6.2 percent to 3.4 percent. However, a significant hurdle in Pakistan's ability to generate employability under CPEC initiatives has been the capacity of our human resources. Despite possessing ninth largest labour force in the world, lack of investments in technical and vocational training has seriously affected the utilization and building of labour skills. As a result, while infrastructure projects under CPEC continue to employ over 90 percent domestic labour, the percentages shrink dramatically in technical projects such as energy and digital connectivity where Chinese national rule the roost. Owing to this fact, in order to enhance capacity of semi-skilled and unskilled labour, several Chinese companies are undertaking. Moreover, China plans to launch several vocational training institutes for introduction of dedicated short training courses.

For Pakistan's demographic structure, with a burgeoning young labour force, the opportunity to generate high-value jobs from CPEC investments is not one that Pakistan can afford to miss. Astonishingly, so far CPEC has created nearly 68,382 direct jobs. It has been estimated that CPEC has the potential to further generate anywhere from 800,000 to 1,500,000 jobs till 2030. For a developing country like Pakistan, investments such as CPEC are valuable for their spill over impact on local firms and labour in terms of transferring technology, boosting individual skills and improving the quality and quantity of employment. The availability of productive, skilled and reasonably priced labour is an asset and it can attract more foreign investment in future.

It has been reported that only 3 percent of the entire CPEC investment would be made in Balochistan. This has set off alarm bells among the people of Balochistan. The issue can be addressed if government candidly discusses the scale of projects being executed in the province. It needs to be clarified that Gwadar is the centrepiece of the CPEC maritime Silk Road linkage. It is acknowledged that the province has several deprived regions that urgently need development and connectivity. There have been reports which indicate that more progress is being made on the Eastern routes in other provinces, whereas there is hardly any progress on the Western route that passes through Balochistan. This confusion prevailing among the people of Balochistan needs to be dispelled without any delay. Issues such as energy and water infrastructure in the province need to be given utmost importance. No stone should be left unturned to ameliorate the conditions of the neglected province.

Recently, the increasing scrutiny of CPEC projects by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has made many stakeholders and investors wary. Some mechanism needs to be devised through which government investigates any malfeasance in these projects. It can be created under the banner of federal government. However, the accountability process should not put brakes on the pace of development and timely execution of CPEC projects.

India's has adopted a belligerent attitude towards CPEC. Although it received an invitation from the Chinese government to participate in BRI, it declined the offer. India rests its objection against the CPEC on the grounds that Gilgit-Baltistan is a disputed territory; Pakistan and China have violated international law, therefore, route of CPEC passing through this territory is unjustified. Another



apprehension of India is that Gwadar deep-sea port is part of China's strategic "string of pearls" project could block and restrict India's maritime movement if any conflict erupts. In order to subvert the progress of CPEC, India has tried to create unrest and insurgency in Balochistan through a spy network. This network was unearthed when Pakistan captured Indian spy Kalbushan Yadav who had been involved in anti-state activities in Balochistan. The Indo-Afghan nexus is also a threat to successful launch of CPEC. As India has many mega billion projects in Afghanistan it has curried favour with the Afghans to show their displeasure for CPEC. Pakistan needs to tackle the Indian propaganda against the CPEC through all available diplomatic channels. It needs to engage China in countering Indian propaganda and strengthen its position.

India is making huge investment in the Chabahar port of Iran to compete with the Gwadar port. Through this project it wants to neutralize the potential of Gwadar port and curtail CPEC prospects. However, considering the amicable relationship between Pakistan and Iran, there are few chances that Iran would be a threat to the strategic interests of Pakistan. Moreover, in the wake of latest round of US imposed sanctions on Iran, China announced US\$200 billion investment in strategic projects of Iran to counter US and Indian influence in Iran.

The present security situation in Balochistan is problematic. There is a low level of insurgency across some areas of the province and infiltration along the border. This presents a challenge in the implementation of CPEC projects. Moreover, a mix of international, regional, national and extremist factors might cause disruptive activities in the province thus threatening the security of the CPEC building. Pakistan needs to engage all insurgents in a dialogue process and remove misgivings through concessions and cooperation. Special efforts need to be made on a war footing to integrate the deprived segments into a comprehensive socio-economic development programme. The crisis in Balochistan can be resolved through a political process of engagement and reconciliation. Special incentives may also be granted to the disgruntled youth to bring them in the mainstream social development.

US and China are fighting for competing interests in the South Asian region. United States feels ill at ease on the launch of this multi-billion dollar project. It has been trying to craft policies which would contain the influence of China in the region. US considers rise of China as a threat to its superpower status and global dominance. US has shown its skepticism over the CPEC project. It has been patronizing India to damage Chinese strategic interests in the region. It fears that the Gwadar port would give China a free pass to Chinese exports and imports. US would not be able to impose any economic blockade due to CPEC project. Both US and China are embroiled in a bitter trade war. Pakistan needs to act prudently in this tug of war between US and China. However, US cannot adopt a hostile approach towards Pakistan as it is dependent on Pakistan for its withdrawal strategy. Diplomacy and caution would help Pakistan achieve its goals.

Pakistan is facing twin debts which have crippled the economy. Its fiscal deficit was more than 8 percent of GDP in the financial year 2019. Its current account deficit was more than US\$11 billion. It caused a serious of balance of payments. It had to contract IMF loan amounting US\$6 billion to control its balance of payments crisis. Since the CPEC investments are loans in different categories, an issue has been raised regarding addition of more debt in a beleaguered economy. A claim has been made that CPEC investment would add to Pakistan's indebtedness.

As per the Chinese statement, the early harvest projects are worth 18.9 billion dollars in investments which is made up of six billion dollars in government loans with a 2 percent interest rate and private investments in the form of equity worth three billion dollars, and 9.8 billion dollars in commercial loans with a 5 percent interest rate. It has been stated by the Chinese government that Pakistan only needs to repay six billion dollars over the span of 20-25 years. CPEC makes up for 6 percent of Pakistan's total external debt worth 105.84 billion dollars whereas other multilateral loans run about four to five times more, dwarfing CPEC loans in comparison.

Since Pakistan is cash strapped and doesn't have many dollars with it, a worry has been shared regarding the seizure assets if Pakistan fails to repay its Chinese loans. Considerable risk lies in Pakistan's ability to stabilize its balance of payments which if addressed seriously, can ward off any chances of debt increase.



Sri Lanka is often cited as a cautionary tale in this regard. However, the circumstances that led Sri Lanka to lease its port to China point to a much more pervasive balance of payment crisis that goes well and beyond its Chinese loans.

China has recently sought to realign its investments in large-scale projects by addressing concerns of exclusivity, sustainability and standards. It has launched a new Debt Sustainability Framework under the Chinese Ministry of Finance, coupled with the Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Financing which is meant to address concerns of debt sustainability, and build multilateral cooperation mechanisms to help share financing for infrastructure projects.

The government should urgently set up a one-window autonomous CPEC Authority. This would achieve the purpose of doing necessary business reforms and accelerate the process of acquisition of SEZs. This would manage the internal challenges of planning, financing and coordinating between institutions, provinces and agencies to build momentum on speedy outcomes.

Government needs to rationalize tax regimes that would favour Chinese and domestic investors. These tax breaks, holidays and exemptions can be granted conditionally for training of labour and technology exchange. Government can also waive Custom duty and Sales tax on machinery imported specifically for CPEC and other allied projects. It needs to address transparency of contracts, avoid controversy and honour sovereign guarantees to provinces where needed. It also needs to enable flexible financing for private joint ventures. These measures need to be taken to materialize the gains of CPEC projects.

Government needs to make amendments to the SEZs Act of 2012 to ensure that SEZs provide Chinese and other companies, at a minimum, the same incentives that other South East Asian and African SEZs are currently providing. It needs to adopt an integrated approach which would deter rent-seeking and guarantee that industries are market driven; and ensure devolved decision making that takes the private sector on board. Since the majority of SEZ companies are expected to be from the private sector, it needs to be ensured that market dynamics determine SEZ policies for long-term viability of SEZ companies. Both countries should develop clear 'rules of engagement' agreed upon which would prove beneficial in terms of expected outcomes.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a framework of regional connectivity. CPEC will economically benefit China and Pakistan and will have positive impact on regional countries. The enhancement of geographical linkages, improved infrastructure and energy projects allow frequent and free exchange of people to people contact and enhance understanding through academic exchanges. It would reshape many economic policies of interconnected countries in the coming years. For Pakistan, it is a catalyst for change and for China it showcases the successful realization of its comprehensive economic outreach to different regions which culminates under its 'One Belt, One Road' policy. Although the project faces myriad threats at domestic and international fronts, yet its prospects are more promising than its threats. Pakistan and China is bound to become a game changer for the economy of Pakistan and would put it back on economic growth track.

# FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES OF PAKISTAN

## OUTLINE

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Protection of national interests
  - (i) Protection of strategic interests
  - (ii) Protection of economic interests
  - (iii) Foreign policy choices
  - (iv) Building new alliances
- (v) Constructive role in regional organizations
- (c) Pak-US relations
- (d) China-Pakistan relations
- (e) Indo-Pak relations
- (f) FATF compliance
- (g) Role at UN
- (h) Afghan peace process
- (i) Balancing relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran
- (j) Stand on Palestine issue
- (k) Reform in foreign policy
- (l) Conclusion

## ESSAY

Pakistan faces multifarious foreign policy challenges owing to its unique geographic position, its role in the war on terror and its responsibility as a nuclear power. It is beset with a weak economy which every now and then lands it into the lap of IMF. It has weak regional alliances in the South Asian region due to a heavy baggage of the past. Its relations with Afghanistan, India and Bangladesh have remained unsavoury for a large part of its existence. It has wholeheartedly dedicated itself to the Kashmir cause and raised its voice against the atrocities inflicted on the Kashmiri people by the Indian government. However, its efforts to kick start talks have been met with diplomatic blockade by the Indian government. It has been successful to a small extent to take benefit from international regional alliances of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), European Union (EU), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and African Union (AU). It is a nuclear power and a responsible member of United Nations. It follows United Nations charter responsibly and cooperates on important issues of human rights, territorial disputes and climate change. It has strategic and trade ties with China and has participated in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to boost bilateral cooperation in different areas of interest. Pakistan has been a key ally of US in the war against terror since 2001. War in Afghanistan has created uncertainty for regional peace in the region and led to a wave of terrorism across Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is a key member in the US-Afghan talks to broker peace and to initiate a process of withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan. It is on the strict watch of FATF which poses a grave challenge to formulate strict policy measures to block access to terror financing. Although it has strategic

ties with Saudi Arabia and Iran and has offered its services to mediate between the two countries to normalise relations, yet it is torn between balancing ties with both of these belligerent countries. It took a valid stance against the atrocities committed against the Palestinians and advocated Two-State solution for Palestine and Israel. It needs to confront these foreign policy challenges and reform its foreign policy to attune it with the requirements of a modern progressive state.

Pakistan's foreign policy has remained hostage to its geo-strategic position, its weak economy which propelled it to make unhealthy alliances and its failure to cement enduring trade ties with developed nations. It encountered many daunting challenges since it achieved independence from Britain in 1947. Partition of Indian subcontinent in 1947 created unavoidable fault lines which posed unique geo-strategic challenge to Pakistan in a hostile neighbourhood. At its eastern border stood a gigantic India which was adamant to strangle the nascent state by denying it its due share of water and resources. India challenged legitimate territorial claims of Pakistan and made it sure that the survival of the newly-created state remained at stake. On its western border laid an antagonist Afghanistan unwilling to acknowledge the existence of territorial demarcation in the form of Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Almost 90 percent of the population at the time of independence in 1947 lived in rural areas. It was dependent on agriculture, industrial footprint was almost non-existent and literacy rate was around eight percent. In these extraordinary circumstances initially it was a challenge to formulate a foreign policy that was reflective of national interests, catered to development and envisaged a responsible role among the comity of nations.

Projection and protection of national interests is the key component of Pakistan's foreign policy. Safeguard of its territorial integrity, enhancement of trade and commerce, resolution of territorial disputes through diplomacy, active participation in regional and international development blocs, execution of policies that promote its interest at international level, right to use its own resources, protection of its nuclear weapons, collaboration and cooperation with UN and its agencies for development and socio-economic uplift, fighting terrorism and attracting precious foreign direct investment are the core national interests of Pakistan. There exist many teething challenges to the national interests of Pakistan.

In the wake of war on terror, Pakistan became an ally of US in its fight to topple Taliban regime which was hosting leadership of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. However, this was not an easy task since Taliban government had been on good terms with the Pakistan government. It was need of the hour to protect its territory from terrorism and any sanctuaries of Taliban in the country so that Pakistani soil couldn't be used for any terrorist activities against US and Afghan governments. Severe setbacks have been suffered by national interest of the country during initial years of war on terror. Terrorism, sectarianism, and poor law and order situation tarnished Pakistan's image abroad during that period. During this time Pakistan was branded as a safe-haven for terrorists. Full-blown military operations were conducted inside Pakistan's territory to eliminate safe-havens of terrorists and destroy their sanctuaries. Terrorism still remains a challenge to the state of Pakistan. However, frequency of terrorist attack has reduced after selective military operations in the country. The elimination of terrorism is coupled with the solution of Afghan imbroglio.

Pakistan's unique geo-strategic position and its nuclear power status have given it a unique position which can be used to its advantage. Some critics are of the view that the idea of geo-strategic position has been oversold. Pakistan has not been able to use its geo-strategic position to earn any dividends. Immediately after independence it found itself tangled in the American military alliances (SEATO and CENTO) due to its geo-strategic position. Moreover, it has not turned this prized position into an economic and trade advantage. To some extent some truth can be found in the observations of critics. Pakistan has a long shoreline; Gwadar port has strategic importance; Strait of Hormuz is easily accessible; there is direct road access to China; and it is separated from energy rich Central Asia by Wakhan corridor of Afghanistan. It can make good use of this position to strengthen alliances with these countries. Its status as a nuclear power has increased its defence capability manifold. Its nuclear deterrence has prevented Indian aggression in the wake of Kargil War, attack on Indian parliament in 2002, Mumbai attacks in 2008 and Pulwama attack in Indian-held Kashmir in 2019.

Foreign policy challenge in lieu of protection of Pakistan's nuclear capability and economical use of its geo-strategic position should be one the main concern of foreign policymakers. Pakistan has always



demonstrated its credentials to be a responsible nuclear state with zero tolerance for nuclear proliferation. It has been an active member of UN arms control chapter advocating control of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. It has also advocated reduction in nuclear arsenal possessed by all nuclear capable countries of the world. It has deliberated with India on the issue of no first strike treaty to eliminate use of nuclear weapons in war. It also called on Indian government to reduce its nuclear weapons. It has stressed on different occasions that it maintains its nuclear weapons only as a deterrence to match imbalance in conventional war against India.

Pakistan's geo-strategic position has not been exploited at its optimum level. As CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) projects start to operationalise, innumerable new opportunities can be tapped to make judicious use of geo-strategic position. US is engaged in war on terror in Afghanistan. China is focused on CPEC and is also developing Gwadar port. Pakistan can engage with Central Asia and Afghanistan to enhance trade ties and tap energy resources through the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Pipeline (TAPI). It can also engage in regional alliances through the platform of SAARC, ASEAN, AU to enhance trade with China and other nations.

Protection of economic interests is an important foreign policy challenge. Pakistani embassies in different parts of the world are custodians of economic interests of Pakistan. They organize trade missions, advertise Pakistani products and engage with host countries to expand appreciation and demand for doing business in Pakistan. The challenge posed to Pakistani embassies is that they are often not aware of the trade potential and advantage which they can offer to host countries. Cognizance of business opportunities, lucrative sectors, flexible tax and customs laws, credit availability and skilled labour are some of the missing pieces of information which can be given to help potential investors. Access to natural resources and their use is often the first lure for any foreign investor. However, as Reko Diq fiasco suggests, shoddy laws and unsupervised permits can cause critical loss to national interest. Regrettably, Pakistan's missions abroad don't take initiative to engage business community in the country to export Pakistan produce. Electronic portals and easy access to register business in Pakistan should be offered through the platform of Pakistani embassies.

Pakistan's foreign policy choices have remained constrained and consistent over the years. It made an unenviable beginning on the international stage. It had to make regional trade and strategic alliances to ensure its survival. Its foreign policy choices were constrained due to an overbearing India which threatened its security and survival. It fought a war with India on Kashmir's territorial dispute in 1948 which further cemented its belief that it cannot neglect its security concerns in a tough neighbourhood. Its foreign policy priorities included forging alliances which provided it with strategic, logistic and economic support against Indian aggression. It has often been discussed that Pakistan should not have become part of American security pacts SEATO and CENTO. Instead it should have focused on bridging ties with USSR. It has been argued by critics of foreign policy that Pakistan could have gained much better by engaging both US and USSR without becoming a camp follower. Pakistan could have easily become member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and benefited equally by making bilateral ties with US and USSR without earning wrath of both Cold War rivals. In hindsight it seems acceptable that Pakistan made a wise decision by going to the US. Firstly, it gained military cooperation and weapon support from the US. Secondly, Russia was in no position to help Pakistan with military and logistic support. Two subsequent wars with India in 1965 and dismemberment of half of the country in 1971 war further buttressed the belief that security concern was the biggest concern for survival of the state. Foreign policy underwent abrupt change during the period of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto government as he launched his policy of bilateralism to engage with different leaders of the world without use of any regional alliances. During Bhutto period, Pakistan widened its alliances and reduced its reliance on US as its main ally. It also made cordial ties with USSR. Pakistan found itself again in the crosshair of American alliance during Afghan invasion by USSR in 1980s and US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 on the pretext of war against terrorism.

Big power interests had a major impact on Pakistan's foreign policy since it seemed impossible to avoid them. Certainly Pakistan's foreign policy challenges were aggravated and it had to begrudgingly fight a war which spilled over into its territory. The pernicious effects of participation in foreign wars made leaders dependent on foreign dole outs and aids. Instead of looking for indigenous ways to resolve domestic problems,

and strengthen position at international stage, preference was shown for foreign aid, military support and help of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB).

Alliances are built to cater to evolving necessities as per domestic needs and changes in international affairs. Pakistan has a history of a tumultuous alliance with the US. After the end of World War II, the US emerged as a superpower. Pakistan has on different occasions participated in US-backed military alliances on different occasions. A critical appraisal of these alliance stints suggests that Pakistan has been the losing partner. It may have gained military support from US but it constrained its options to make more alliances. One of its endurable alliances has been with China over the years with which it enjoys a significant degree of camaraderie. It enjoys flourishing ties with Japan, Germany, France, South Korea and Canada. But in order to have a robust foreign policy to protect its national interests it needs to diversify its alliances and cooperation mechanisms. In the past few years, Pakistan has successfully harnessed a formidable relationship with Russia. This relationship has been fruitful as it has helped to engage Taliban and Afghan government on the negotiating table. Moreover, it helped to ease Russian objection on Pakistan's membership to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). But Pakistan's foreign policy formulators don't need to show any complacency. It is high time that new alliances are explored and forged so that country can expand its trade and economic clout.

Pakistan has always been eager to play a constructive role to advance its national interest by avidly participating in regional economic alliances. It is a member of South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and holds observer status in Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), European Union (EU) and African Union (AU). It has always promoted its national interests, vouched for peace and advocated safeguard of human rights. It is cognizant of the fact that each organization entails a different set of commitment, interest and importance. It promotes its trade, security and strategic interests via these organisations. Moreover, it is also member of several economic forums where it participates regularly to advance its economic interests and project a realistic and lucrative image of the country.

Pakistan's relations with US have suffered many a rollercoaster and bumpy ride in the past. It has been ditched many a time after it participated in US alliance. Its reliance and dependence on US is based on the fact that it needs US military support and assistance to counter India's aggression in the region and to counter imbalance of power in the South Asian region. Historically, every alliance with US left Pakistan bruised and worse off. Pakistan helped US in the Afghan *jihad* between the years 1980-1988 and ensured that Russian aggression and occupation of Afghanistan was defeated. However, immediately after the war, US imposed sanctions on Pakistan to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons. Similarly, in the wake of US declared War on Terror and attack on Afghanistan in 2001, Pakistan once again became an ally of the US. It was tagged as the most allied ally and after a while as the most battered ally. The problems in US relations with Pakistan germinate from some basic facts. It is the asymmetric power distribution which drives this relationship. Unfortunately, US partners with Pakistan only when it is national interest of US. Regrettably, lapse lies on part of Pakistan which has failed to offer any trade, economic incentive to US to forge a durable partnership. Other than the Afghan war and issue of terrorism, Pakistan doesn't hold any strategic and trade significance for US. Contrast this with the US and India relationship. Trade and strategic relations are a great source of attraction and attention for US in its relationship with India. Moreover, the US has been trying to project India as a counterweight against China.

Pakistan's relations with the US remain a formidable challenge for the foreign policymakers of the country. Since US has been embroiled in a two decade old war in Afghanistan, it is Pakistan's responsibility to support an Afghan peace deal that protects Pakistan's national interest. Any hasty deal to negotiate Afghan peace process in the wake of US presidential elections in November 2020, may lead to unplanned withdrawal of US from the region. Any unplanned withdrawal from Afghanistan by US forces can be a recipe for disaster as comprehensive peace and ceasefire deals have not been brokered yet. It is therefore need of the hour to have comprehensive deliberations with US, Taliban and Afghan government delegations to agree on any power-sharing agreement. Moreover, Pakistan can't afford to grind itself under undue pressure of US against its ties



with China. Pakistan's relations with US are altogether different from that of China. Therefore, Pakistan needs to tread a fine line in balancing its relations with US and China so that its national interests are not sacrificed.

Pakistan enjoys cordial relations with China in trade, technology, culture, commerce, strategic and military cooperation. Pakistan amicably resolved its border disputes with China in the Gilgit-Baltistan region in 1962 which paved the way for confidence building and lasting ties between the two neighbours. Given the incredible increase in advancement made by China in the last two decades, bilateral ties have further cemented between Pakistan and China. Both countries have been supporting each other's stance on international forums. China's stance on Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Tibetan areas is principally supported by Pakistan. In the same manner China unequivocally supports Pakistan's stance against illegal occupation of Indian-held Kashmir (IHK) by India. China's help in building strategic partnership with Pakistan has been notable in many instances. The two allies have partnered to build JF-17 Thunder, nuclear power generation houses, road and building infrastructure, dams etc.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been a new chapter in the relations of the two countries. Under the umbrella of CPEC, various energy, infrastructure, communication and trade projects would be implemented in Pakistan which would enhance capacity, skills set and opportunities for Pakistanis in their own country. It is a multi-billion dollar investment by China under the umbrella of CPEC amounting roughly \$60 billion in a span of 5-6 years. Through this project Pakistan would enhance its connectivity with regional countries. It would gain swift access to China, Central Asia and West Asia. It would benefit Pakistan's beleaguered communication and transport sectors and would help to capture more share of regional trade. Lately, there has been criticism and negative feedback by US over the modalities agreed between China and Pakistan pertaining to CPEC. As per observations of US, CPEC projects undertaken by Pakistan would increase Pakistan's foreign debt and embroil the country's weak economic system. However, Pakistan and China have dispelled this criticism and negative feedback surrounding the CPEC projects. The investment made by China in CPEC projects are in the form of soft loans and other financial agreements which have catered to the external liabilities of Pakistan. The notion of CPEC being a sell-out is unfounded. Pakistan has wholeheartedly shown its commitment to execute CPEC projects and reject any negative press against CPEC projects. It has engaged China's foreign office to give detailed briefing on CPEC projects so that all terms and conditions are laid out in black and white.

China is a permanent member of UNSC wielding veto power. Relations with India and Pakistan have always remained fraught with distrust and allegations. Pakistan has made good use of diplomacy to protect its national interest by balancing its ties with China and US in the region. It has earned China's support on the Kashmir issue in UNSC and other international forums. It has also been supportive of China's position on other diplomatic fronts. With the help of Russia and China, Pakistan has gained membership of SCO to take advantage of its framework to combat terrorism and increase its strategic power. The present challenge is to maintain cordial ties with China and avoid Indian bullying in South Asian region, take benefit of the economic opportunity offered by China and use China's influence as a balancer in South Asian region.

Historically, relations between Pakistan and India have remained strained throughout last seven decades. Contentious territorial disputes led to three conventional wars between the two neighbours. The war fought in 1971 saw dismemberment of half of the country as Pakistan lost its eastern wing which became Bangladesh. Distrust, allegations and unresolved territorial disputes have created a climate of fear in the South Asian region between the two nuclear armed neighbours. An arms race in the region has prevented the two arch rivals to focus on more pressing issues of poverty, health, employment and development. Relations between the countries have never remained upbeat. However, Mumbai attacks of 2008 were a watershed as India blamed the attack on Pakistan and made a total boycott of Pakistan on cultural, diplomatic and international fronts. Relations became more embittered as hardline BJP came into power and adopted policy of isolating Pakistan on international forums. Indian government adopted the policy of maligning Pakistan as breeding ground and perpetrator of terrorism in Afghanistan and Indian-held Kashmir (IHK).

India has spurned all offers to start any dialogue on the Kashmir issue. It has rejected diplomatic talks showing its contempt for any normalization of ties between the two countries. This policy has posed a unique

challenge to Pakistan which is constantly raising its voice on the international forums to highlight illegal Indian occupation of IHK. Hardline BJP government stripped IHK of its special constitutional status and imposed lockdown on the Kashmir valley. Moreover, it revoked law which forbade Indians of non-Kashmiri origin to purchase property in IHK. Hence, it made a planned move to change demographics of IHK. Leaders of Hurriyat party termed Indian government's move as annexation of Kashmiri land and abrogation of their special constitutional status.

Pakistan's immediate foreign policy concern vis-à-vis India is to highlight Indian atrocities in IHK. It has engaged UNSC to pass resolution against illegal occupation of IHK. However, India has ditched Pakistan's efforts by highlighting some ambiguous and confusing clauses of Simla Declaration signed after 1971 war between the two countries to treat the matter as bilateral issue. Pakistan is left with some options to resolve the issue of IHK by highlighting atrocities committed by Indian forces against Kashmiris. It has raised awareness on international forums regarding imposition of lockdown in Kashmir. It has also sought vote of confidence from OIC countries, US, UK, China, Russia and other notable EU member countries. Indeed world has chosen to look the other way ignoring Indian atrocities since India is a big economic market for investment. Moreover, US is using India as a pawn to contain influence of China in the region. It seems a tall order to resolve IHK issue between the two arch rivals as India seems in no mood to communicate. The future of Pakistan and India talks doesn't seem promising in the wake of teething challenges besetting their fraught relationship.

Pakistan is finding it hard to get off the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list due to inaction in certain areas highlighted and embittered relations with the opposition. The FATF is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog that sets international standards that aim to prevent these illegal activities. It formulates policies to generate necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas.

The FATF had given 27 points action plan in June 2018 when it placed Pakistan into grey list to address issues related to money laundering and combating terror financing. In October 2019, Pakistan was declared complaint on 5 points and in the February 2020 it was declared complaint on the 9 more points. So far Pakistan has been declared fully compliant on 14 points out of 27 on which it has addressed concerns of FATF group. On the remaining 13 issues it was tasked by the group to categorically report progress by October 2020. During the period from February 2020 to October 2020 government has amended numerous laws and taken several actions to remove the weaknesses in its Anti-Money Laundering Law (AML)/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) regime to address FATF concerns over money laundering and terror financing. But these measures have not convinced the global body to take Pakistan off the grey list.

Asia Pacific Group (APG), the FATF's regional affiliate, monitoring Pakistan's progress on the remaining 13 points is expected to retain Pakistan in the 'enhanced follow-up' list. The APG has acknowledged that Pakistan has made "some progress" in addressing the deficiencies in its framework to fight money laundering and terror financing by taking measures to reduce vulnerability of national savings, Pakistan Post and real estate dealers to money laundering and terror financing. However, major changes in technical compliance have not been made and FATF recommendations in large part remain unimplemented. Therefore, it seems a challenge to get off the grey list in the pending review in October 2020 meeting. Some observers are hopeful that Pakistan will be moved out of the list as some meaningful reforms have been introduced since February 2020 though they lack in enforcement. Presently, Pakistan needs the support of a minimum of 12 member countries of the 39-member FATF to exit the grey list. It is in liaison with all members to secure their support. In case it doesn't get the required support of 12 members then chances are that it will get more time to work on our AML/CFT regime. It is need of the hour to take opposition on board in the legislative process and frame laws with their consultation. It needs to put all heads together so that it is removed from the FATF grey list.

Pakistan joined the United Nations (UN) on September 30, 1947, just over a month after its independence. Being a member of UN, it committed itself to uphold human dignity and maintain global peace. It followed UN agenda which emphasised the need to end extreme poverty, food shortage, hunger, gender



discrimination, colonization, slavery; protect human rights, abolish capital punishment; improve sanitation, maternal and child health care; achieve universal literacy and provide potable drinking water.

Pakistan has been diligently following UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which will enable us to join the league of upper middle class countries by 2030. It was the first country to adopt SDGs 2030 agenda through a unanimous resolution of parliament. Federal government conducted discussions on post-Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with all stakeholders for coordinating and strengthening efforts at federal and provincial levels to achieve Pakistan's sustainable development and poverty reduction targets.

Over the last 72 years, Pakistan has put this vision into practice by making significant contributions to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter. It is member of various UN agencies and plays constructive roles in different position to work for human rights and socio-economic development of its population. It is involved in the decision-making process of UN agencies and has shown considerable responsibility on critical issues of climate change, human and drug trafficking, science and technological advancement and protection of world heritage sites. It has been an advocate of inviolable territorial integrity of all nation-states, use of diplomacy to resolve contentious issues, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and their transfer, arms control and a comprehensive ban on testing of nuclear weapons. It has notable contribution in international peace and security missions of UN as a peacekeeper. It has been an ardent advocate of multilateralism and the primacy of the United Nations in international affairs.

Pakistan is earnestly committed to eradication of terrorism in all its manifestations. It has used UN forums to advocate elimination of terrorism by dismantling terrorist structures and extend cooperation in fighting it. It has been a victim of terrorism during the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan as war spilled over into its territory. It has always shown its concern for initiating dialogue to combat terrorism. It has been instrumental in launching talks between the Afghan government and Taliban to sign a durable, inclusive peace process.

Pakistan has always approached UNSC to address festering Kashmir problem. It has sought UN to implement UNSC resolutions to resolve the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan. It has used UN forum in the Security Council and General Assembly to gain support of neutral observers. It has raised voice for the atrocities perpetrated on the Kashmiris in IHK at the hands of Indian forces. Pakistan has been a vocal advocate for the right of self-determination of the people of Jammu & Kashmir who should be allowed to choose their destiny in accordance with UNSC resolutions.

Pakistan has been a leading voice for the reform of the Security Council to make it more democratic, inclusive and accountable through reform of its membership and improvement in its working methods. It has advocated for a regional level veto as well as veto limited to a conditional vote. It has also sought to empower General Assembly since it has more participation of member-states.

During the recent coronavirus pandemic, Pakistan has cooperated with UN in sharing data, research, feedback and UN-sponsored medical and travel advisories. It has shared its research in vaccine development to end coronavirus pandemic and shared its strategies with UN to combat coronavirus. Its role has been appreciated by UN-secretary general who lauded Pakistan's containment of corona cases.

Pakistan continues to encourage use of UN platform to urge need for dialogue, diplomacy and international cooperation to address existing and emerging international challenges, in an effective and credible manner on the basis of consensus and concerted collective actions. At UN, Pakistan delegation is cognizant of the competing struggle on ranging issues in Africa, Middle East, Central Europe, Latin America etc. Peace and stability in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Kashmir are among chief concerns of Pakistan at UN.

A key challenge to Pakistan's foreign policy is to ensure an Afghan peace process that is inclusive of all stakeholders. Pakistan has engaged Afghan Taliban, Afghan government and US leadership to chalk out a plan to arrive at a negotiated peace process. The first step to begin initiative for peace between Afghan government and Taliban is to agree to a ceasefire and safe withdrawal of US forces. However, some voices have raised concerns regarding honouring of commitments by Taliban. At present, flexibility is not being shown by Taliban leadership who has shown no qualms of abiding by any ceasefire agreement. Even while talks of US

withdrawal and power sharing modalities were being discussed, Taliban have not desisted from attacking US and Afghan forces.

Pakistan cannot ignore the fact that any prospects of achieving peace are in favour of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Keeping in view Indian interests and stakes in Afghanistan, it would be a terrible waste of opportunity if Pakistan didn't seize this moment to honestly broker an Afghan peace deal. As Pakistan government has cited in its earlier messages to US and Afghanistan government, peace in Afghanistan is going to guarantee peace in South Asian region. The Afghan power equation is complex and there are genuine fears about country crumbling into civil war after the exit of US occupational forces. This would be a doomsday prospect highly unfavourable to all parties to the Afghan dispute. Every sincere effort needs to be made to make Afghan peace process successful. Pakistan has categorically stated that it would now allow its soil to be used for any terrorist activities or any activities that would compromise territorial integrity of the Afghan government.

Recent spate of war of words between Saudi Arabia and Iran has posed a challenge to foreign policymakers in Pakistan. At the heart of the Saudi-Iran war of words lays a desire to gain more power and to win more influence in the region. The Saudi-led bloc contains Arabic speaking countries except Qatar who have advocated US sanctions against Iran. Moreover, this Arabic-speaking bloc is an ally of US. A toxic mix of US partnerships in the region including Yemen war and a turf war between Saudi-led alliance and Iran supported Houthi rebels has created considerable tensions in the Middle East region. Recently in September 2020, UAE and Israel have announced formal normalised diplomatic relations between the two nations. This significant step needs to be analysed in the wake of more Middle East Arabic speaking countries normalizing diplomatic with Israel. These new developments have the potential to change the course of relations between UAE, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, and Iran, etc. Pakistan is closely watching these rapid significant changes in the Middle East region. It has friendly relations with both countries. It has a sizeable Shia minority which has affiliation with Iran. On the other hand, a majority is spiritually attached to Saudi Arabia. In this extraordinary situation, Pakistan has repeatedly offered its services to broker peace between the two estranged Muslim countries.

Pakistan has multiple interests in both countries along with cultural and religious ties. Any untoward situation in the region can engulf the two countries in a war-like situation and fuel further mistrust between the two countries. Pakistan can ill afford such an eventuality. It has also used clout of China and Russia to engage Iran and Saudi Arabia in talks. It has clarified that any proxy war or clash of words would end semblance of peace in the region and unleash hidden competition for power. It is therefore advisable to resolve all outstanding issues through dialogue and cooperation.

Pakistan has always remained committed to a just and comprehensive resolution of the Palestine dispute. It has advocated Palestine cause as a core principal of its foreign policy denouncing illegal occupation of Palestinian land by Israel, right of return of Palestinians to their lands prior to the 1948 demarcation of boundaries. It has supported earlier US, UN and EU efforts to hold peace talks to resolve the simmering Palestine issue. Lately, US government under the leadership of Donald Trump has shed all pretence of being an impartial broker of peace between Israel and Palestine. Two-state solution has been buried and road-map to peace deal has been shelved. Recent trilateral US-UAE-Israeli agreement under which the UAE would fully normalise ties with Israel has once again changed the dynamics of Palestine-Israel relationship.

Pakistan on the eve of this new diplomatic development categorically stated that its approach toward resolution of Palestine issue is guided by an honest appraisal of how Palestinians' rights and aspirations are upheld and how regional peace, security and stability are preserved. It has clearly stated its position on normalisation with Israel would depend on how Palestinian interests would be best served and security in the Middle East is preserved. It iterated its abiding commitment to the full realisation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination. It reminded the international and Palestinian community that it would consistently support a two-state solution in accordance with the relevant UN and OIC resolutions as well as international law for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.



A key challenge to Pakistan remains reform of its foreign policy. Its geo-strategic significance and security concerns have constrained its choices to reform its foreign policy. Its foreign policy options are heavily reliant on security concerns to safeguard its interest in a hostile neighbourhood. Longstanding territorial disputes between India and Pakistan; and influence of mega powers to control their strategic interests have held the region hostage. In this climate of uncertainty, power struggle and survival it is a teething challenge to explore new alliances and soft levers to advance national interests. It is need of the hour to take some concrete steps by relying more on trade linkages, exploring development of collaterals, cooperating diligently on combating terrorism, and establishing focused trade missions. It has lately forged comprehensive and cordial relations with Russia. It is a significant relationship which shows that there is always need for realignment of ties in keeping national interests.

Reforms should contain new training paradigm, careful planning of alliances, collaboration with think-tanks and regular input from neutral observers. Reform process should begin from recruiting process and then targeted training to build capacity of newly-recruited diplomats. Better training resources, facilities, cultural exchanges and attachments in different departments of the State should be ensured so that Pakistan missions abroad now every detail about the potential that can be explored by foreign investors. Alliances should be kept in view national interests and leverage that can be gained through that alliance. Foreign policy should have more input from career diplomats instead of personnel from security establishment. A comprehensive strategy needs to be chalked out so that vital interests of security establishment and democratic institutions are well represented.

Pakistan is at a critical crossroad of making prudent foreign policy choices to advance its national interests and achieve socio-economic development. It has to play a crucial role in winding up US launched war against terror in Afghanistan so that a lasting peace deal is negotiated between Taliban and the Afghan government. It has raised its voice for the Kashmiris and desired a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute as per UN resolutions. Its sincere efforts to engage India in peace dialogue have been spurned by Indian government. It has to balance its ties with US and China and derive benefit from both relationships. It has to address FATF challenge to avoid getting blacklisted. Any lax attitude against implementing FATF recommendations is going to further taint its economic credentials and jeopardise its efforts to fight terror financing and money laundering. It is in a critical phase of executing CPEC projects which have the potential to earn economic dividends for its beleaguered economy. It needs to balance its ties with Saudi Arabia and Iran and negotiate peace between them through diplomacy and dialogue. An acrimonious relationship between Saudia and Iran is going to adversely affect Pakistan. It has always taken a firm stand in favour Palestinians for their rights and struggle against Israeli aggression. It needs to reform its foreign policy to safeguard its national interests and protect its territorial integrity and security. It can use good policy options and prudent decision making to overcome these foreign policy challenges.

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# **SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES OF PAKISTAN**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Current Scenario
- (c) Social Problems
  - (i) Unconscionable poverty
  - (ii) Uncontrolled overpopulation
  - (iii) Rampant illiteracy and education
  - (iv) Pernicious child labour
  - (v) Discouraging unemployment
  - (vi) Corruption-riddled society
  - (vii) Abysmal health sector, and lack of basic amenities
  - (viii) Women empowerment
  - (ix) Injustice and weak judicial system
  - (x) Absence of rule of law
  - (xi) Lack of Housing facilities
- 4. Economic Problems
  - (i) Low tax-to-GDP ratio
  - (ii) Crumbling tax bureaucracies
  - (iii) Low FDI and huge debt trap
  - (iv) Energy Crisis
  - (v) Low export and high import
  - (vi) Lack of diversity in manufacturing sector
  - (vii) Inflation
  - (viii) Lack of tourism
- 5. Suggestions
  - (i) Eradication and alleviation of poverty
  - (ii) Ensuring equal distribution of wealth
  - (iii) Population growth be controlled
  - (iv) Reform of education system
  - (v) Legislation to prevent child labour
  - (vi) Improving employment prospects
  - (vii) Reform of education system
  - (viii) Curb menace of corruption
  - (ix) Provision of quality healthcare to all citizens
  - (x) Provision of basic amenities to all citizens
  - (xi) Empowerment of women in society



- (xii) Strengthening of judicial system
  - (xiii) Provision of low cost-housing
  - (xiv) Strengthening the tax bureaucracy
  - (xv) Ease of doing business to attract FDI
  - (xvi) Multiple energy sources
  - (xvii) Diversification of exports
  - (xviii) Increase in tourism prospects
6. Conclusion

## ESSAY

Pakistan with a burgeoning population exceeding 220 million people is beset with multiple socio-economic problems. It has abysmally failed to keep unbridled population growth in check. Its capacity to monitor a large population through a declining state structure is outdone due to lack of resources, poor revenue generation, wasteful expenditure, lack of policy coordination and poor planning. It contends with distressing poverty which is incapacitating its precious human capital. It faces poor education prospects as its literacy level is barely above 58 percent. Its health indicators are disappointing with a large chunk of population grappling with preventable water communicable disease. It has failed to eradicate polio so far. It has unemployment hovering around 9 percent which tellingly speaks volumes about the poor shape of economy. Embarrassingly it has failed to protect its children from poverty-ridden child labour. It has not succeeded during seven decades to achieve meaningful empowerment of women. It has failed to confront abuse of fundamental rights. It has failed to provide basic amenities to its citizens. Its judicial system is sluggish, frustrating for the weak and disappointing for those who don't call shots in the corridor of power. It lacks proper housing for more than 40 million families. Its economy is teetering from the tenterhooks due to large trade and budget deficits which glaringly showing weak structure of the economy. Every off and on it has to knock at the door of IMF to resolve its external payments crisis. A daunting challenge lies ahead of it to resolve socio-economic issues.

Poverty has been one of the big challenges that confront Pakistan today. About 20 percent of the population lives below the poverty line earning less than a dollar a day. There are various dimensions of it ranging from lack of opportunities, ownership of tangible and intangible assets, availability of means and access to basic amenities. The other dimension of it is rural versus urban poverty. About 60 percent of the population lives in rural sector. About 58 percent of the total labour force in the country is engaged in the agriculture sector. Rural poverty represents a skewed distribution of resources, ownership of assets and entitlement; availability of cheap water, fertilizer and electricity, and technical assistance provided by the agriculture department, and absent economic uplift plans across different strands of the rural population. Illiteracy, lack of industrial infrastructure to boost employment, and low intensive farming leading to a low yield per acre leave the farmer destitute. Farmers get small returns for their annual labour which leaves them dry in a perpetual cycle of poverty. Urban poverty results from migration from one city to another. People are forced to live in slums or highly-crowded places deprived of basic amenities such as potable drinking water, sanitation and waste disposal facilities. Herein, factors like lack of resources, education, technical skills, unemployment and connections creates problems for people.

Pakistan is the fifth most populous country in the world. No wonder it is struggling hard to leash the growth of its accelerating population growth. Annual growth rate exceeding 2 percent is high since the country doesn't possess the wherewithal to feed a large population, and provide with education, healthcare, education and basic amenities. Some critics are of the view that a large population is a large talent pool which can be tapped as an asset. In case of Pakistan the contrary view that a large population is a liability seems to hold true for many reasons. Firstly, successive governments have absolved themselves of the responsibility to cater to the needs of the population. Secondly, the state cannot provide universal health and education to population

since it has limited means. Thirdly, state has failed to resolve issues such as malnutrition, water-borne diseases, physical stunting rooted more in poverty than genetics. Fourthly, the composition of economy is such that only a semi-literate labour force is required for the agriculture sector and that too is unproductive. A large population means unemployment would be rife since there is no room in economy to absorb unskilled people in industrial and services sector. Automation is rapidly rendering joblessness among various tiers of industry. Sadly, government has been unable to regulate population growth among the low earning tiers of working class. Cultural and religious factors have also exacerbated efforts of governments to achieve population control. The desire to have male child and more helping hands has often led to large family size.

Education sector of Pakistan is in abysmal shape. It is lagging behind its objectives to achieve quality education, universal literacy and decreasing dropout among student of primary education. There is a raging debate about low allocation of funds to education sector and lack of fund utilization. Astonishingly, it is often conveniently ignored that after military, education is the largest bureaucracy of the country which employs a sizeable work-force. After the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, education has been devolved to the provinces. The combined educational budget allocation of four provinces is a whopping Rs.800 billion plus. It makes one wonder where does this huge chunk of money go when there is persistent teacher absenteeism, children dropout and poor education standard. Despite sincere efforts by different governments for the promotion of education, literacy rate still lingers at 58 percent. Poor planning and skewed allocation of resources has resulted in impoverished government schools deprived of basic facilities like proper classrooms, water, sanitation and electricity. A recent research has indicated that unavailability of toilets for female students in public schools has been a factor in female dropout. There is a huge disparity between urban and rural public schools. Rural schools are located far-off and children face difficulty in attending them. Urban public education has receded to outskirts of cities with little to no presence. Interestingly, a large share of urban schooling pie belongs to private schooling which shows that education department has divorced itself from reclaiming turf lost to private schools. It also points out the fact that provincial education departments are ineptly managed which can't even achieve low hanging targets in rural areas. Meanwhile, quality of education imparted differs significantly between the public and the private sector. The standard of public education is low and caters to lower middle and lower economic classes. Outdated curriculum and teaching pedagogy hasn't helped matters in improving public education standard.

Pakistan is poorly equipped to face the problem of unemployment. The existing unemployment rate is around 15 percent in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. Prior to corona unemployment had already exposed fissures in the economic system at two important points. Firstly, education sector was not target oriented to prepare graduate students intellectually for the job market. Secondly, education system was wasting precious resources on a substandard education model which was totally divorced with the market dynamics. Secondly, an import-oriented economy divested precious talent from the local economy and led to flight of talent from the country. It also highlighted lack of priority accorded to technical and vocational education. Government awareness campaigns didn't highlight opportunities that could be given to fresh graduates. No technical advice was made available regarding the choice of career. Private sector couldn't add jobs due to shrinking manufacturing base and high cost of doing business in Pakistan due to uncertain availability of gas and high fuel prices. Some economists are of the opinion that unemployment is persisting because agriculture and manufacturing sectors are not growing. In contrast services sector is still posting more than 4 percent annual growth.

Child labour is an unavoidable scourge in which poverty-stricken families force their young children to do manual labour at a young age. Children as old as six years are employed in manual labour doing domestic work at homes, working in shops, factories, repairing shops, etc. Child labour is tormenting for the child as it robs it of its precious childhood, parental care, education prospects and recreation. Parents compromise on education, food and livelihood of their children. Child labour often inflicts physical and mental abuse on children and keeps them yoked to servitude. It is a manifestation of poor family planning, lack of awareness, inability of parents to cater to physical need of their children. While it is present in the society it is not possible to achieve literacy targets as parents don't pull out their children engaged in manual labour fearing a further push toward poverty and survival. Socialization and upbringing of children engaged in manual labour is an



uphill task as children are left to fend for themselves. Many a precious talent is wasted at the altar of child labour. Some research also suggests that engaging in criminal and bad company at an early age has often been correlated with child labour.

Corruption is a socio-economic curse eating away the roots of public institutions, professionalism and implementation of rules and regulations for governance. Transparency International (TI) has ranked Pakistan 134th globally among 180 countries in the world. It has often been argued that corruption is a cause that has led to poor economic conditions and pathetic state of public institutions. However, it is an effect of institutional and ethical failure in the society. When public institutions became weak and compromised and short sighted decisions were made, it set the stage for corruption to creep in the corridors of power and decision making. Nevertheless, for all the ensuing debate it is true that corruption runs unbridled in all walks of life. Some of the factors that have contributed to corruption are weak accountability laws, poor institutional framework to check excess of power and weak monitoring of rules and regulations. It has led to recruitment of poor human resource, shady deals, loss to public exchequer, flourishing of black economy and skewed distribution of wealth. Absence of any powerful corruption watchdog means that what lies ahead is a bleak future.

Pakistan's performance and efforts to maintain a healthy population and provide potable drinking water and clean sanitation to its population are dismal. Many health issues, infectious disease and epidemics are rooted deeply in poverty. Lack of clean drinking water, sanitation and food nutrition is leading toward health decline and assault of disease. According to a study, poor health conditions in Pakistan are alarming and require action on two fronts. Firstly, the country needs to alleviate poverty so that people could focus on health and development. Secondly, the country needs to remove systemic flaws in the governance set-up so that it could spend more on prevention and less on cure. The country spends less than 10 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on health, safe drinking water, sanitation and development of basic infrastructure. Health infrastructure is overburdened by influx of large number of patients, understaffed due to lack of health staff in different public hospitals, underequipped due to lack of bedding and patient treatment facilities, and underfunded to provide quality medicine and operation facilities. Primary healthcare is not adequately equipped to provide basic healthcare services to people living in rural and semi-urban areas. Resultantly, tertiary healthcare in urban cities has been overburdened.

Pakistan has fared poorly over the years in empowering women in its society. Women comprise more than 51 percent of its population but their contribution in different areas leaves much to be desired. A regressive patriarchal culture, lack of economic incentives and absence of equal opportunities have prevented women from realizing their true potential. In different walks of life, social participation, economic contribution and political representation, women role has been restricted or confined to oblivion. Women routinely encounter violence, discrimination, rejection, harassment and domestic abuse. Scant attention is given to their health, education and economic independence. There are laws that promise women sanctity of equal rights but there are very few mechanisms which ensure where their grievances are addressed.

Pakistan doesn't boast an enviable record in administering justice. The judicial system is fraught with flaws, lacunas and acts of omission. There are inordinate delays in making orders, wrong convictions, and sham trials. Lower courts are overburdened and cases take years to decide. Frivolous litigation to block access to justice is rampant as notorious elements exploit legal lacunas and shortcomings to deny people their genuine right. Fair trial is a casualty in instances where lower court judges succumb to cultural and religious pressures.

Rule of law has been mercilessly trampled in the last seven decades. It is disheartening to know that rules are bypassed contravening and violating its spirit and purpose. Integrity and sincerity have been compromised for ulterior motives. Compromises are made in self-interest instead of upholding the law. Institutions have not been strengthened to assert and make their own decisions. Instead it is personalities which are overbearing and powerful. A deliberate attempt has been made to leave room for discretion and make decisions on one's own likes or dislikes.

Housing problem in the rural sectors and urban areas has become a serious concern for successive governments. More than 40 million people are without any housing facilities. Cost of affordable housing has

skyrocketed due to inflation and influx of black money in real estate. China cutting, land scams, and mushrooming of private land schemes has exacerbated the issue of housing in the country. Urban centre development schemes by government land developers present great challenge of corruption, land grab and litigation. Other allied industries such as water, labour, construction and steel which are linked with housing present significant challenges and opportunities.

Social problems are inextricably linked with economic problems. In fact, many social scientists and economists are of the view that it is economy which leads to social issues. A nation going dry on revenue would exacerbate poverty, despondency, crime and unemployment. Lack of investment would reduce number of jobs, uproot industry and divert precious human resource. Lack of funds could derail human development projects. Health, development and education could be jeopardized if economy is not functioning properly.

Pakistan's economy is in dire straits. It has been struggling to keep afloat by posting modest annual increase. Share of manufacturing and agricultural sectors are rapidly decreasing with the passage of time and are at an abysmal 18 and 17 percent, respectively. Services sector forms the largest sector of the economy which is growing annually at a decent rate. Economy is no stranger to balance of payments (BOP) crisis and foreign debt. Country has no choice but to embrace IMF plans to resolve its BOP crisis. There are further issues of import and export imbalance and fast depleting export potential of the country. Energy crisis and water crisis can cripple the capacity of the economy to expand.

Pakistan has a low tax-to-Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio. It earns hardly 10 percent of its entire GDP in terms of federal and provincial revenues. Its federal and provincial tax bureaucracies have lost their turf over the years and are clueless about increasing tax revenues. There are consequential issues of corruption, inordinate delays, policy confusion, excessive taxation, and poor execution. Low revenues means that state has to contract debt to pay for hefty expenditures. This untoward situation seems unavoidable since state is not willing to invest in the capacity of tax bureaucracies. Moreover, state is unaware of the business transactions taking place since a large chunk of economy is based on cash transactions.

Pakistan economy has regularly been facing the issues of budget deficit at domestic sphere and foreign trade deficit—lesser exports and greater imports—in the form balance of payments (BOP) crisis at external level which have ripped apart its economic potential. Due to poor performance of federal and provincial tax bureaucracies the state earns less than it spends which consequently leads to budget deficit ultimately leading the country to borrow more from domestic banks to fill the financing gap. Foreign trade deficit indicates a low manufacturing base and a consumption based economy which export less and import more. This trend gives rise to balance of payments crisis in which the country doesn't have enough foreign exchange to pay for its imports. Resultantly, it has to knock at the door of IMF to acquire loan to alleviate its balance of payments crisis.

Multidimensional energy crisis has crippled an already tumbling economy. It is threatening for the industry insofar as it consists of power outages, gas shortages and intermittent supply, high tariff and loss of electricity. Higher fuel price, shady electricity agreements by previous governments with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) have crippled the energy sector. Incidence of circular debt has further aggravated the situation in the energy sector. Poor prospects of energy sectors have also repelled precious foreign investment. Investment in renewable energy production has been slow. Despite the potential for hydro, solar and wind energy, Pakistan still relies predominantly on the costlier and redundant thermal energy to fulfil its energy needs. Water also forms a significant part of the energy industry as it provides electricity and irrigation for industry and agriculture. Water shortages and changed weather patterns have adversely affected industrial and agriculture growth.

Pakistan's industrial sector is suffering from multidimensional problems. Its predominant problem is lack of research to develop a diversified range of product and attract foreign investment. It is import dependent and manufactures a very narrow brand of value-added products. Most of the family-owned manufacturing businesses are based on consumption products. There are few manufacturing interests which export and earn a decent foreign exchange. The country boasts only five export sectors which are textile, carpets, leather, apparels and cereals.



Manufacturing and agriculture sectors are lifeline of economy since they employ a large labour force and provide employment and several welfare facilities. A major policy issue is that Pakistan has not been clear on the issue: whether to engage a semi-skilled labour force in the manufacturing and agriculture sectors to alleviate unemployment, or it should tap in to more productive and less labour intensive services and IT industries and earn precious foreign exchange. The issue of policy constipation has resulted in lesser innovative steps to achieve modernization and competitiveness.

Pakistan has been unable to attract greater share of foreign direct investment (FDI) to boost its economy. Systemic issues such as ease of doing business, lack of skilled labour and abrupt change in government policies make foreign investors to rethink Pakistan as a favourable destination for investment. Putting business operations in work through a crumbling bureaucracy wherein multiple departments require verification kill any impetus to conduct business. Change in government policy is abrupt which often affects investor confidence. Moreover, inadequate infrastructure facilities such as lack of industrial theme parks, road connections, availability of raw material and cheap electricity for industry development have stymied the growth of industry beyond certain urban areas and drove away foreign investors. The country has not been able to project its soft image abroad to attract precious foreign exchange. Its trade missions and embassies have been unable to keep liaison with industrial sector of host countries to present them with attractive opportunities. A disconnect exists that has created a perception that Pakistan is not a favourable destination.

High inflation due to increasing cost of fuel, electricity and abrupt fluctuation in dollar exchange rate have ripped away precious earnings of people and pushed them toward poverty. Stable inflation not only provides impetus for economic growth, but also helps uplift vulnerable strata of society. However, lately, inflation has increased prices of consumable items by cutting a line across household budgets. It has increased the cost of doing business manifold.

Despite many tall claims by successive governments tourism industry has not been able to attract potential investors and tourists. There is negligible contribution of tourism industry in the GDP growth of the economy. Dilapidated infrastructure, inadequate hospitality services and poor law and order situation present daunting challenges to the advancement of tourism industry. Pakistan has neglected the upkeep of its cultural heritage sites and it is in no position to boast about the lure of its derelict archaeological sites. The employment in the tourism industry has suffered due to low visitation and poor revenues. It is a fact that northern areas of Pakistan have been places of great tourist attraction. But negative image and low investment have not allowed Pakistan to be a great tourist destination.

Population growth should be controlled by spreading awareness about the advantages of small families among the masses through media, basic health units and lady health workers. It needs to be recognized that population control can be affected through cultural and economic awareness. Smaller families won't come out just through awareness campaigns. People need to recognize the need for smaller families to alleviate poverty, pay more attention to the education and healthcare of their families. The economic model in vogue at present is labour intensive which would not be changed overnight. Tailored solutions are required to address population planning for the needs of a developing economy.

Poverty alleviation programmes should be initiated to reduce poverty by introduction of reforms and expansion of social and economic safety nets. Provision of employment, skill training and facility of credit are one of the few ways to make people financially independent and stand on their feet. Social safety needs are good for harnessing social contacts within the community which can be used to provide more opportunities to people around them. Social scientists are of the view that there are multiple dimensions of poverty which can be narrowed down to lack of opportunity, means, access and education. Without state intervention to provide adequate opportunities all talk on alleviating poverty would be circumscribed to sustenance and survival.

Education is among the largest government departments in the country beset with innumerable intractable problems. Immediate task should be to target areas such as dropout ratio, student and teacher absenteeism, physical punishment and poor teaching methodology which need to be addressed forthwith. An automated system can be introduced to check for presence of teachers and students on a daily basis. Frequency of absences should be reported immediately to surveillance teams and education headquarters.

Class size and school facilities need to be upgraded in keeping with the view that they also affect learning and participation by children. The issue of ghost schools and teachers needs to be busted to expose corrupt education mafia. Other creeping issues which require attention are qualitative improvement of public schools, books and curriculum.

Extraordinary effort needs to be exemplified to encourage children to acquire scientific and secular education. Teaching ought to be made optional in mother tongue and English language. Public education system lacks behind private since there are strict checks and balances and regular monitoring of progress. Efforts need to be put in developing critical and creative thinking among students. Every effort needs to be made to link study with real life so that real life problems are confronted with real time solutions. Special attention should be given to areas where literacy rate is lower despite large number of population. Similarly, location of schools from far-flung areas also needs to be changed so that travel time decreases. Higher education needs to be modernized and synchronized with need of industry. Research culture should be encouraged from the beginning to help in seeking creative solutions.

Health has been made a provincial subject after passage of 18th Amendment to the constitution and provincial governments are now duty-bound to resolve all extraordinary issues related to healthcare. Targeted prevention to control epidemics, communicable disease and viruses needs to be made at rural level. Burden on tertiary care needs to be reduced and basic health facilities need to be introduced at rural area level to provide sufficient care for the rural population. Health facilities need to be expanded. Increased spending by provincial governments is required to provide more bed facilities, free medical treatment and medicine. Health insurance needs to be introduced to gradually phase out hefty medical expenditures by federal and provincial governments.

Youth bulge and a large chunk of below 25 years of population can be translated from a liability to an asset by creating greater employment opportunities. Policymakers should focus on areas which can absorb in different sectors of economy. Trading and services sector can be targeted as they require more human development and low infrastructure investment. Government has introduced a tax credit for companies which employ fresh graduates. Digital revolution has taken the world by a storm. Young generation is adept at using technology. It would be in the fitness of things to tap this digital revolution by using digital platforms for advertising, marketing and service delivery.

Women empowerment is a key plank of any economic uplift plan. Pakistan needs to empower its women in all walks of life. It should start from giving quality healthcare and education at the school level. All efforts need to be expended to ensure presence of girl students. They ought to be equipped with other useful skills such as knitting, sewing, cooking and handmade handicrafts. Women representation in jobs can be increased by increasing women quota and better employment terms. Maternity leave and other sick leave should be made available to incentivize healthcare. Firms which employ female staff beyond a certain proportion can be given tax credit or reduced taxation incentive. Since Pakistani society is largely conservative, exclusive girls and women colleges need to be opened across the country. Awareness seminars need to be organized that explain the benefit of equal participation of women in society and appreciates their contribution to household.

Any strong and functional society stands on the pillars of a strong judicial system and rule of law. Judicial system needs to be modernized and extricated from its grinding delay prone functioning. Litigation should not be dragged for years as it doesn't help matters of justice. Automation, regular up gradation and necessary amendments in laws need to be made to serve the ends of justice. Judicial officers should be made independent and free of any political pressure. Working strength, office structure, complaint management system and access to courts should be ensured to make judicial process simple. Justice should be accessible to all and sundry by removal of bottlenecks in the process of achieving justice.

Rule of law can never be achieved without reforming social and economic systems. Strict non-discrimination rules should be ensured and implemented. No exceptions should be given to any system or institution. There should be no room for discretion. Penalty should be levied in case of violations. Often rule of law is reduced to the working of police department. This is a narrow approach fraught with limitations as rule



of law extends to all public institutions through which government tries to achieve objective of good governance. Rule of law would remain a pipe dream if individuals are preferred over institutions, parochial loyalties and interests are preferred over laws and lip-service is preferred over law.

Corruption is widespread across all tiers of the state and there are no signs to show that government is serious about reducing it. Sadly past seven decades have not seen any meaningful improvement in the evolution and development of provincial and federal corruption watchdogs. Firstly, a detailed study needs to be conducted that can identify prevalence of corruption in different departments. Most of the power in country revolves around land and real estate. Specific departments need to be targeted to evaluate margin of speed money that is paid. Salary increase, grant of perks and other incentives need to be introduced to reduce incidence of corruption. Meanwhile, NAB and provincial anti-corruption department need to check ownership of assets and lifestyle of officials working in corruption-prone departments on a regular basis. Recently, government enacted *benami* property law but on the immense pressure of FATF blacklisting. This law can be used to unearth hidden properties of people created through financial malfeasance. Regrettably, corruption watchdogs are working only to politically blackmail politicians instead of putting any efforts to eradicate corruption.

Pakistan can reduce its housing problem by launching low-cost housing scheme projects in different urban areas. The project can envisage vertical expansion of high rise building in well ventilated and lit environments. It can construct new highway complexes to connect to small urban areas across the city such that large urban areas are splintered and cost of land acquired is low. It would also encourage development of allied industries. Government should also launch mortgage schemes to build houses first and give people ownership once their dues are paid. It needs to reclaim land from illegally built housing schemes and put land development authorities in order. It should also intervene regularly to bust large land development mafias.

Pakistan can ill afford to keep its tax bureaucracy decrepit. Tax bureaucracies generate revenue to keep economies afloat and provide for adequate spending on social and economic uplift plans. Every now and then news on slashing development expenditure causes uproar among critics and policy circles. The news is bad enough to ring alarm bells since it directly impinges the right of downtrodden to have a decent and respectable lifestyle. Several sanitation, education and health schemes are shelved whenever development expenditure is slashed. Therefore, Pakistan needs to boost its tax revenue collection to spend more on the well-being of its masses. It needs to introduce tax reforms and crackdown on tax defaulters and evaders. It has to uproot corruption within the tax departments and reward personnel for their meritorious conduct. It should move toward the documentation of the economy.

Tax potential can never be realized in the presence of a cash economy which doesn't leave a trail of transacting parties. Tax collection is also important from the point that it is the responsibility of the state to distribute wealth among the population through the imposition of different taxes. The gap between rich and poor must be decreased by ensuring equitable distribution of wealth. There is another windfall to reducing income inequality: it reduces poverty by transferring from the rich toward the poor. In order to achieve this goal the best recipe is to have an equitable taxation system which imposes tax on increase in income and assets. Presently, tax breaks and credits are provided to the capitalist class. Moreover, government has introduced a regressive taxation scheme which targets expenses. It has tried to make its job easy by deducting taxes in advances. A paradigm change in tax reform and implementation is required to achieve revenue targets and avoid budget deficits.

Pakistan's industry is suffering from constipated approach to tackle several issues afflicting its growth and survival. It has largely been based on a consumption model and government subsidized low import prices which eroded domestic manufacturing base. A large population meant that large industrial houses preferred local consumption industries instead of focusing on export-oriented sectors. It needs to begin targeting small sectors which can manufacture small accessories and value-added goods. It needs to focus on plastics, homemade appliances, mobile accessories, etc. which can employ labour and small machinery. One particular problem with the manufacturing industry is that it has lost its competitiveness over the years. Bereft of ideas

and impetus it is whining about costly raw material and high cost of electricity. Government can help in establishing liaison with private sector so that diversified product range can be introduced for export.

Energy crisis, water shortage and circular debt have raised the cost of business and increased prices of consumable fuels. High cost of electricity price and frequent gas shortages has repelled investment in industrial sector as investors are left with a narrow profit margin. Government should target different manufacturing sectors on the basis of their contribution to national taxes and provide them with subsidized electricity. It should also encourage Alternate Energy Development Board to give incentives to companies on the basis of employing clean energy for their manufacturing. Apart from incentivizing business, hydro-electric dams, solar parks and wind corridors should be established by the government to improve energy crisis and minimize the gap between demand and supply.

Pakistan also needs to work on its water crisis at domestic and industrial level. It needs to revamp and redesign its ageing irrigation infrastructure. Domestic water supply has been severely affected due to changing weather patterns and population increase. Moreover, no plans have been formulated to replenish dry water aquifers. Agriculture and industry take a large share of available water. Innovative technological measures need to be employed to save water and use it efficiently. Any negligence to ignore water distribution and usage reforms can deal a deafening blow to the society and economy.

Ease of doing business needs to be introduced if Pakistan expects to increase foreign direct investment. Multiple splintered business accreditation channels and inordinate delays make it difficult for local and international investors to invest in industry. Judicious use of information technology can be made to integrate business registration and compliance of local, provincial and national laws. One window operation needs to be introduced which takes cares of payments of utilities, allows for banking and access to multiple public institutions.

Pakistan has great potential for tourism. It has scenic northern areas, vast plains and large deserts with a rich cultural heritage. It can improve accessibility and infrastructure of tourist areas to generate employment and precious foreign exchange. It has engaged bloggers and tourists which have acted as good ambassadors of peace and tourism. Pakistan can use its education sector to host research and cultural exchange programmes with other universities of the world and promote a soft image of the country. Tourism can be promoted for recreation, business and cultural exchanges with all parts of the world.

Pakistan is engaged in an existential survival struggle in which it has been pitted against keeping itself afloat and maintaining its growth momentum as a progressive democratic state. It is confronted with myriad socio-economic issues which threaten its performance and governance. In order to cater to the burgeoning needs of a rapidly growing population, it needs to introduce reforms and well-thought-out plans to revive its socio-economic sectors. It needs to control population growth through a variety of policy instruments. It has alleviated poverty during worst times. It needs to increase its employment and reduce income gap to alleviate abject poverty. It can impart technical, vocational and formal education to its population to increase literacy rate and provide it with necessary useful skills. It needs to ensure provision of clean drinking water and increase its health budget allocation. It can revive its economy by reducing imports thereby reducing burden on economy. It needs to introduce product diversification in the manufacturing industry and produce more value-added goods for exports. It needs to improve its tax collection and get rid of perennial budget deficits. Without reform and planning no headway can be made in eradicating socio-economic problems of the country.



# **PEACE IN SOUTH ASIA CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT A PERMANENT SOLUTION TO THE KASHMIR ISSUE**

## **Thesis Statement**

The Kashmir dispute is as old as the momentous event of partition of the Indian subcontinent into two independent states. Its seeds were sown in the treachery of instrument of accession which could be adopted by the ruler of the Princely State. The aspirations of the people to determine their right to self-determination were not taken resulting in a historic upheaval.

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
  - (i) Territorial dispute
  - (ii) Aggression by India
  - (iii) War of Kashmir Independence
  - (iv) UN resolutions
- (b) Wars and conflicts between the two neighbouring countries
- (c) Peace accords and their failure
- (d) Musharraf and Vajpayee talks
- (e) Fate of composite and comprehensive dialogues
- (f) Track-II diplomacy to resolve the issue
- (g) Issues in resolution
  - (i) Indian obduracy and urge to impose regional hegemony
  - (ii) Strong Indian economy and investment of countries
  - (iii) Fear of right-wing and media backlash
  - (iv) Politicization of a genuine issue
  - (v) Distrust and lack of coordination
  - (vi) Lack of people to people contacts
- (h) Effects of the dispute
  - (i) Regional peace, trade, development and cooperation in danger
  - (ii) Serious setback to the economies of these countries
  - (iii) Focus on militarization instead on poverty
- (i) New dimensions to the issue
  - (i) Denial of rights, atrocities, constitutional protections, security and special status, human rights' violations
  - (ii) Puppet governments to extend rule in the blockaded valley
  - (iii) Killing of Burhan Wani
  - (iv) Indigenous struggle branded as Pakistan funded terrorism campaign
  - (v) Revoking of Article 370 and special constitutional status

- (j) Options before Pakistan
- (i) Revival of SAARC
  - (ii) UN Resolutions and efforts to raise awareness regarding Indian atrocities
  - (iii) UN General Assembly forum to highlight the role of India
  - (iv) Mediation offer by the USA
  - (v) Prospects of war and nuclear threat
  - (vi) Interest of EU in the Kashmir issue
- (k) Conclusion

## ESSAY

Kashmir conflict has been a hanging fire between the states of India and Pakistan since their independence from Britain 72 years ago. The dispute which initially started from the reluctance of Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir to accord approval to join either India or Pakistan became a territorial dispute when negotiations, wars and parleys couldn't break the ice between the two neighbours. It also transformed the relationship between them from being neighbours to arch rivals. It has had significant ramifications for the entire region. The two countries have fought four wars which have sowed seeds of deep discord and distrust. Regional peace, trade, cooperation and cultural exchanges have taken a heavy drubbing due to this conflict. Threat of a nuclear war has become imminent as balance of power has been disturbed and tilted in Indian favour due to a spectacular rise of Indian economic and political clout in world geopolitics. The threat posed by this conflict can hold the entire region hostage to nuclear war if left unresolved. Over the years the Indian efforts to clampdown on the Kashmiri people and suppress their peaceful struggle for self-determination has been viciously despotic and cowardly. It has stripped Kashmiris of their rights, committed gross violations of human rights, fired gun pellets at them, laid a siege to the entire valley and jailed thousands of peaceful protesters. It has put restrictions on communications, blockaded the valley and jailed politicians. If immediate steps are not taken to resolve this conflict then the entire South Asian region would be engulfed in the conflagration of a nuclear armed struggle, war rhetoric, setback to trade and shift focus away from human development and eradication of poverty.

The Kashmir issue sprouted from the complex management system of princely states by the British Raj in the Indian subcontinent. In order to run this large imperial enterprise spread over half a continent, the British authorities had to create and maintain several types of territorial arrangements, local collaborations to run the affairs of princely states under its rule. These Princely states were semi-autonomous, generated their own revenue and the government had granted them a certain degree of legal and administrative autonomy from the Raj within their borders. The division of India and Pakistan into two independent states spelled the unravelling of this web as new provinces and princely states acceded to joining the two fledgling states.

The process of accession was painful and tumultuous as new political and legal arrangements to integrate swathes of territory, both big and small, which once belonged to the princely states was being taken with a lot of furor, bickering and fights. In order to address this intimidating challenge, the two states embarked on an accession spree to absorb these territories into their respective borders as quickly as possible. Accession treaties were negotiated; deals were made with local elites and some states honoured the pledge made at the time of elections. Reportedly, 13 princely states acceded to joining Pakistan after 1947 with notable among them being Bahawalpur, Hunza, Kalat, Lasbela, Khairpur, Swat and Makran.

At the time of partition of Indian subcontinent by the British in 1947, Jammu and Kashmir was the second largest princely state. It had been annexed by the British forces in 1846 and then sold to Gulab Singh of the Dogra dynasty for a payment of 7,500,000 rupees. Hari Singh the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir State at the time of partition, owing to the unique geographical, socio-cultural status of the State was skeptical of partition and wanted to retain the independence of the state. Four major rivers originated from the Himalayas located in Kashmir and it also shared a border with China — the two factors that made it a strategically crucial region. In



other words, it was a prized territory. Moreover, the state had a Muslim majority population with the dichotomy of a Hindu ruler. Both countries, therefore, formed strategies to lay claim to it.

The 3rd June Plan of 1947 and Radcliffe Award had created a dilemma for the princely states and the two countries. Through the 3rd June plan the princely states were given the choice to join any of the two independent countries as per their consent to accession or they could retain their independence. Meanwhile, the Radcliffe Award gave India unfair advantage and access to Kashmir as it got Pathankot and Gurdaspur in the East Punjab. This made India's access to Kashmir easy and paved the way for its hegemonic designs to annex the Jammu and Kashmir State.

Given these circumstances, matters on the political front at this time were altogether different and unhelpful for the Muslim majority of Kashmir who had no say in the process of accession to India or Pakistan. In politics Sheikh Abdullah, a prominent Kashmiri leader at the time of partition headed the largest political party in Kashmir, the National Conference. He was a staunch opponent of the Dogra dynasty. He had initiated a "Quit Kashmir" movement before the British left India in 1947 and, hence, was imprisoned in May 1946. However, he was not in favour of joining Pakistan. His opposition to Hari Singh, therefore, was not tantamount to support for accession to Pakistan. As has been noted by some historians, the Quaid was wary of Sheikh Abdullah. It has also been noted that Sheikh complained that Quaid never accorded him the importance which he deserved.

Meanwhile, clamour for joining Pakistan began loud in the Jammu and Kashmir valley as atrocities and repression against the Muslim population increased. Hari Singh tried to brutally suppress the struggle of the Kashmiri people. This led to an armed struggle between freedom fighters from Murree, Hazara and parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) who raided the valley through the Poonch area and began a widespread campaign to destabilize his regime. Realizing an impending toppling of his rule by the freedom fighters and a possible military intervention from Pakistan sought immediate help of India. The rule of Hari Singh was saved only after he promised to sign the instrument of accession in favour of India.

Immediately after Hari Singh gave his consent to join India, India airlifted its troops to Jammu and Kashmir to get complete control of the Kashmir territory. This led to the first Indo-Pak war over Kashmir and resulted in the division of the territory into Indian-held-Jammu and Kashmir (comprises the regions of Kashmir valley, Jammu and Ladakh) and the smaller area with Pakistan-Azad Kashmir plus sparsely populated regions in the High Himalayas known as Pakistan's Northern Areas" now designated as Gilgit-Baltistan. The dividing line between Azad Kashmir and Northern Areas and Indian-administered Kashmir originated in a Cease-fire line in 1949 under the UN resolutions.

India informed the international community that it had intervened in Kashmir on the urgent appeal from the government of Jammu and Kashmir for help against tribal invaders who, it claimed, were aided and abetted by the Pakistani government. It argued that the accession was the justification for India's military presence in Kashmir as it was now an Indian territory. Pakistan vehemently denied Indian claim to the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. It insisted that the actions by the freedom fighters (tribesmen) were an almost instinctive response to the atrocities being committed against Muslims in Kashmir with Pakistan having no role in it whatsoever.

In order to strengthen Indian claim of acting as a saviour of the people of Jammu and Kashmir it knocked the doors of United Nations. The UN called for immediate cessation of hostilities and cease-fire and issued resolutions to resolve the conflict through a plebiscite so that people of Jammu and Kashmir could exercise their right to self-determination. Pakistani leadership, however, opposed the proposal of plebiscite as long as the Indian troops were present on the Kashmir soil. Both Quaid and Liaquat Ali Khan consistently rejected a plebiscite in Kashmir as long as Indian troops were there which would deter the average Muslim in Kashmir from voting for Pakistan. Moreover, Sheikh Abdullah's open tilt towards India could compromise the results of the plebiscite.

The Kashmir conflict has been constantly inflicting new wounds on the bodies and souls of the Kashmiri people in their struggle for self-determination and liberation from Indian subjugation. They have been victims of human rights abuse, rape, murder, abduction, arbitrary trials and house arrests. The

entire Kashmir valley now resembles a proverbial incarceration camp where freedom of association, expression, assemble and right to choose leaders is held hostage. The frequent media blackouts, restrictions on movement and internet access speak volumes about the Indian intimidating and arm twisting tactics against the Kashmiris.

The conflict has changed the socio-political landscape of the Kashmir region and the two neighbouring countries. On one hand, it has perpetrated violence against the Kashmiri people. It has left three generations of Kashmiris clamour for independence. These generations are removed from the political process and have grown into poverty, conflict, despondency and violence. On the other hand, it has embittered relations between the two neighbouring states and sowed seeds of distrust and lack of confidence in each other. It led to four wars and a serious blow to the peace process. Fact of the matter is that this conflict has taken the focus away from some extremely serious concerns grappling the two countries.

Both countries suffer from extreme poverty, malnourishment, and high maternal and infant mortality rates. Clean drinking water, contagious and water-borne disease, starvation and education issues stalk a large number of populations. Health, education, security and social welfare systems are in a decrepit condition. A constant looming threat of war has given both countries an untenable excuse to shirk at the popular demands of fulfilling the responsibilities of controlling these grave issues.

Talk of war, jingoism, ideological war whipping hysteria and lack of dialogue has closed doors on the pursuit of peace in the region. Resources are being diverted towards the war machinery instead of channelling them in the socio-economic streams to reap the benefits of development and cooperation. Trade between the two belligerent countries is unsatisfactory and far less than its potential. In case trade is expanded, people to people contacts would improve which would leave to expansion of commerce and cooperation. It would help address the grave problems of poverty eradication, employment generation, exchange of labour and skills.

Both India and Pakistan are nuclear armed neighbours. The spectre of a nuclear war or catastrophe can spell doom for the entire South Asian region. The tilting of balance of conventional power in favour of India due to large Indian army as compared to Pakistan has changed power dynamics. Peace in the region now hangs from a precarious nuclear thread given the disproportionate Indian power and weak Pakistan position. In case of any terrorist attack on the Indian soil any Indian resort to conventional war would be difficult for Pakistan to neutralize. There is a growing sense in Pakistan that the India's heavy-handed strategy in Kashmir to clampdown on Kashmiris is likely to backfire. It could spark a major indigenous insurgency which will be difficult for India to control. India could put the blame on Pakistan and engage Pakistan in conventional war. It heightens Pakistan's concerns which could use nuclear weapons to counter Indian aggression. The world is fully aware that a Pakistan-India conflict could turn into a disastrous war with an inherent nuclear dimension.

The nuclear threat has another obnoxious dimension of a hysterical arms race. In order to gain competitive advantage over each other, both enemies engage in expansion of the nuclear arsenal. Both India and Pakistan have tried to reach accords on reducing their nuclear arms. However, Pakistan has always taken lead in claiming that its nuclear arms are only for deterrence and it would like to keep a minimum threshold to protect itself from any possible Indian aggression. It has also suggested ratifying an agreement on "No first use policy" which has been snubbed by India. Moreover, the Indian side has dithered on coming to any terms regarding reduction of nuclear stockpiles. This non-cooperation is not a harbinger of peace for the region.

Regrettably, the Kashmir conflict has caused serious setback to the economies of the two countries. Not only have these two countries prevented any economic cooperation among themselves, they have also blocked economic cooperation in the entire South Asian region and among the SAARC countries. India has no access to Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asian countries. Similarly, Pakistan has no access to the economies of Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. In the wake of new infrastructure projects being initiated in Pakistan and Afghanistan, trade howsoever negligible, cannot be discounted as a nonstarter for breaking the ice.

Regional cooperation under the rubric of SAARC has been made almost redundant due to Indian intransigence to cooperate. In the past few years India has rebuffed attempts to hold any meetings under



the SAARC platform. This doesn't bode well for the development and cooperation for the region. Any promise of regional development and increase in trade and economic cooperation shall remain a pipe dream as long as trade is not prioritized over politics. It has often been stated by different Indian think-tanks that India can make progress without using the crutches of SAARC.

Talk between Pakistan and India started soon after it became known that the ruler of Kashmir was not willing to accede to both of them. Being suspicious about each other's activities, they wrote to Britain to explain their positions. They were candid in their confessions regarding the solution of the Kashmir conundrum. Nevertheless, both sides were not ready to make any compromises. Pakistan was relentless in advocating the cause of Kashmir from the very beginning. Even before the partition of British India, Quaid had eloquently spoken on the Kashmir issue and stipulated it as a core issue in his struggle for a separate homeland for Muslims. Nehru who himself had Kashmiri origins, on the other hand, was a close confidant of Sheikh Abdullah — the leader of National Conference Party of Kashmir — and Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir.

As the tug of war between Pakistan and India ensued to win over Kashmir, hostilities and war broke out between the two neighbours. Immediately following the cessation of hostilities in the first Indo-Pak war of 1947-48, both parties started dialogue to resolve the core issue of Kashmir. However, India was not ready to make any concessions during the talks. It shied away from listening to indigenous Kashmiri voices. It clearly knew that the ruler of Kashmir was no more than a rubber stamp and they also had a sycophant Sheikh Abdullah within its political camp who would not hesitate to mute the voices of struggling Kashmiri population.

Amidst all the machinations of India, it clearly became evident to Pakistan that Kashmir issue was fast turning into a festering territorial dispute. In the absence of Kashmiri people and a genuine leadership who could vouch for their right to self-determination, all Pakistan had in its cards was to negotiate on divisions of maps — a cartographic representation of space bereft of people and their history, identities, voices and relationships — to resolve the Kashmir conflict. Pakistan wanted more than divisive maps. It wanted voice of Kashmiris, right to self-determination, end of blockades, media blackouts and human rights' safeguards. India under the pretext of protecting the region as per its constitution was not willing to concede any space to Pakistan. It rejected Pakistan's request on the issue of plebiscite by stating that elections had already been held under the constitution of India. Both countries cited their limitations on selling the deal to their respective people. Indians negotiators especially didn't want to pretend weak to their people. Hence, some very sensible suggestions were brushed aside.

The changing power dynamics in the South Asian region and beginning of Cold War raised some hope for the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Pakistan wanted to modernize its military and it joined American military alliances to beef up its weak military position compared to India. Meanwhile, India remained neutral during the Cold War and sought beneficial relations and received aid from both US and USSR. Pakistan and India began to talk to each other to resolve the Kashmir issue once again. The Indians were cautious about the intervention of any foreign players in the peace process from the very beginning. They made a frank admission that Pakistan should expect no deal on Kashmir if any other party tried to mediate.

Pakistan knew that India had always claimed that the entire Kashmir region was indivisible. It therefore concluded a border agreement with China to demarcate the international border along the Kashmir region and China's Xinjiang region. It therefore consolidated its own position on Kashmir region under its control without giving it a provincial status. India, however, alleged that Pakistan had insincerely given the Kashmir territory which belonged to it to China. India reiterated its vow that there could be no talks between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue unless any foreign parties were excluded.

The Simla Agreement was signed after the 1971 war between India and Pakistan. It was a compromised negotiation insofar as the events of war had left Pakistan terribly wounded and the issue of securing immediate release of Prisoners of War (POWs) made Pakistan's bargaining power poor. Firstly, it laid down bilateralism as a principle underpinning all future negotiations between Islamabad and New Delhi. India didn't want any role for external mediators as well as the UN in the Kashmir dispute. On the other hand, Pakistan was adamant that without foreign mediators having any role, India would never

budge from its present position of lifting blockade of the valley and conduct plebiscite. Pakistan also felt that the bilateral condition for participation would leave with only weak moral and legal authority, if any at all to resolve the Kashmir dispute. Secondly, the agreement prevented both India and Pakistan from interfering in the territories owned or controlled by the other side.

Tensions remained high between two neighbours after the Simla Agreement and takeover of the civilian government by the military regime of Zia-ul-Haq. Various rounds of talks were conducted between the intervening periods of 1980-1998. The armed Kashmiri struggle against repressive rule of India started in 1989. This further soured the relations between the two nations as India repeatedly accused Pakistan of cross border infiltration and militant raids. Some rays of hope for peace process to gain some momentum reached when Indian PM Vajpayee visited Lahore in 1998 and signed the historic Lahore declaration. However, in 1999, India covertly launched a secret limited war in the Kargil area which dented the peace process. As a result, the understandings reached on the Lahore Declaration between prime minister Nawaz Sahrif and prime minister Vajpayee were discarded.

Talks revived only after President Pervez Musharraf made some sincere overtures to India regarding the resolution of the Kashmir issue in 2002. A series of marathon summit meetings were held in Agra. Musharraf stated categorically that Pakistan was willing to go to any lengths to resolve the issue of Kashmir and ease the misery of the Kashmiri people. He suggested conducting a plebiscite in the Kashmir region, joint administration of the region by the two governments, declaration of the entire Kashmir region as an autonomous state independent of any influence from India and Pakistan. However, these suggestions were not accepted and no agreement could be reached on resolution of the Kashmir issue.

The failure of direct talks between the top-leadership of India and Pakistan led to the launch of Composite and Comprehensive dialogues to address confidence building measures to resolve the Kashmir dispute along with other disputes such as Siachen, Sir Creek, Water distribution and trade. Both sides conducted a series of parleys under the rubric of Composite Dialogue to first resolve low hanging fruits that would build confidence and trust among the two states. However, these talks couldn't bear any fruitful result as the Samjhota Carnage in 2007 and Mumbai attacks in 2008 derailed the entire peace process. The two countries were once again rattling sabres as the unresolved disputes stalked around with Indian accusations of cross border terrorism and instigation of violence.

In the wake of a huge gulf of distrust both countries decided to give peace a chance and started informal talks between notable personalities, philanthropists, journalists and writers to improve the climate of cooperation and understanding. A series of meetings were convened in India, Pakistan and other SAARC countries where people from both countries tried to make an honest and candid exchange about the views of the people. They tried to highlight the cultural similarities, common issues of governance and human development to have a better understanding among each other. The informal diplomacy chapter on the Track-II diplomacy has been convening regularly since 2008 and now conducts meetings at neutral venues. However, not much headway has been made in terms of opening the official channels for talks as India has not shown any inclination in resuming the dialogue process.

Since the beginning of the crisis, it has tried to take advantage of its greater size and bully Pakistan and Kashmiri people into accepting the illegal annexation of Kashmir. The main hurdles in the resolution of the Kashmir issue is Indian arrogance and obduracy to stall all efforts at achieving peace in the region. Despite the indigenous status of the Kashmiri struggle against Indian oppression, accusations have been hurled against Pakistan as instigator of violence. Pakistan has been bandied by an Indians as an official sponsor of state terrorism. Moreover, in its effort to discredit the relentless struggle of the Kashmiri people and shift focus away from its atrocities and grave human rights' violations, India has been trying to isolate Pakistan diplomatically in the world politics. In its quest to impose its barbaric hegemony on the Kashmiri people, it has committed gross violations of human rights.

A strong Indian economy and interest of global players in making investments and trade deals with India have emboldened India to commit dastardly acts of human rights without being answerable to anyone. World powers have looked askance to human rights' violations in Kashmir courtesy the large Indian market which offers attraction to investors. The morality of champions of human rights has failed the litmus test of human rights' violations, aggression against the Kashmiri people and trampling over



their inalienable right to self-determination.

Since 2014, the Indian government is being ruled by the right wing BJP party which has openly advocated the policy of Hindu rule in India. It has made no secret of imposing a Hindu rule in the Kashmir valley. It has whipped up fascist narrative to impose its nefarious rule in Kashmir. It has shown no regards for the murders committed and the people blinded by gun pellets. In order to win over the right wing population, the BJP under the tutelage of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has stoked inter communal differences and tried to exploit the rift between India and Pakistan. It has also maintained a position of non-cooperation with Pakistan. The Indian government beholden to the dictates of the right wing parties doesn't want to look weak and initiate talks on the Kashmir conflict.

The politicization of a genuine issue has made the Kashmir a flashpoint of aggression between the two nuclear armed neighbours. Pakistan has been using all possible means to raise awareness about the atrocities committed by the Indian forces in Kashmir. However, the ruling government in India has deliberately tried to make it a political issue to earn mileage and rope in as many voters to consolidate its hold on power. It had been running all political affairs through buying cheap votes and horse-trading in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. It created a puppet rule in the Kashmir valley by installing a political regime oblivious of the plight of Kashmiri people and the humanitarian tragedy that has engulfed three generations.

The killing of Burhan Wani who took to the internet social media to expose Indian atrocities in the occupied valley of Kashmir opened a new chapter of resistance against oppressive Indian rule. The fact that peaceful agitation of Kashmiris was met with an iron repressive hand made it intolerable for them to face a muted death. They came out on streets and challenged Indian naked hegemony. The response of Indian regime was as per ritual. Airlift more Indian army troops, clampdown on news media, halt internet services and block access to information.

Discontent with its show of force, the Indian government did the unimaginable by revoking the special status granted to Kashmir under the Article 370 of Indian Constitution. Under this article, Kashmir has been given a special status of a semi-autonomous state. There were restrictions on the purchase of property by non-Kashmiris in the state. There was a ban on inter-marriages and the Assembly of Kashmir was independent from the Indian National Assembly. The Indian government by revoking Article 370 has formally annexed Kashmir into its own territory. It has made this in violation of several resolutions of UNSC and in stark disavowal on the part of the world community that Kashmir is a disputed territory.

Kashmir issue is the core part of Pakistan's national and foreign policy. Pakistani leadership has avowed never to abandon Kashmiris in their struggle for self-determination. It has raised its voice for the Kashmiris at all forums of the world. It has taken concrete steps to ensure that the voice of Kashmiris is heard. In its speech to UN General Assembly, it highlighted the plight of the Kashmiri people. It cajoled the international community for its inaction on human rights' violations in Kashmir. It also called out on the international to honour its obligations to investigate human rights' violations without considering the lucrativeness of the Indian market. It also demanded the resolution of Kashmir in the light of the UNSC resolutions.

In order to address the Kashmir conflict, Pakistan would need to adopt a mature approach of engaging key global players which could exert pressure on India to come to the negotiating table. It should use the UN platform to court five permanent veto yielding powers USA, UK, France, China and Russia in its favour. It can get crucial support from China on the Kashmir issue. Pakistan can rope in UK and France on its side as it can highlight the Indian atrocities against the Kashmiris. So far these two countries have played neutral on the issue of supporting Pakistan on its Kashmir stance. Pakistan has been able to cement good relations with Russia. Although Russia has been a longtime ally of India, yet recently Pakistan has made tremendous gains in forging good relations with Russia. Moreover, Pakistan has tremendous strategic advantage to offer Russia in the wake of CPEC project.

Pakistan needs the support of USA in getting a concrete deal for the resolution of Kashmir issue. It wouldn't be easy for these parties to deliver India on the negotiations table. Nevertheless, USA is deeply mired in Afghanistan and requires Pakistan's help in exiting from the region. Moreover, the US elections

are not far away and US government is eager to broker an exit deal which requires considerable help from Pakistan side. Through diplomacy, Pakistan can use its back channels to broker a peace deal between the Taliban and US government and help in devising an early exit strategy.

The role of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is crucial to the resolution of Kashmir conflict. Pakistan as a member of OIC has always been helpful in addressing all conflicts pertaining to Muslims anywhere across the globe. It has been vocal on the Palestine and Myanmar issues. It expects similar help from all brother Muslim countries on the Kashmir issue. The forum could exert pressure on India by condemning the atrocities committed by it. It could impose ban on Indian products and impose visa restriction on Indian manpower and labour. It could also encourage OIC members to desist from making any investments in India. It could use oil as a power to bring India towards negotiations.

Similarly, regional cooperation under the auspices of SAARC needs to be exploited. It is true that India doesn't want any cooperation or engagement with Pakistan. In fact, this obduracy of India has held the development of the entire region hostage. SAARC is practically dysfunctional and irrelevant for trade, cooperation, information exchange and development. However, as it is said that one could choose one's enemies but not neighbours, therefore, sooner than later India would have to revive SAARC. Before India does its piece of share, it is incumbent upon Pakistan to take full advantage of inter-regional trade in the absence of India.

EU is key trading partner of both Pakistan and India. Pakistan has apprised the EU on the humanitarian track record of Indian government in the Occupied Kashmir. It has raised alarm bells for the EU countries and shaken their conscience. It has cited several covenants of international law to give Kashmiris their right to self-determination. It has shared instances where international law was binding on states in case grave violations of human rights occurred.

The engagement of Hurriyat-Kashmiri leadership for the resolution of the conflict is of utmost importance. Pakistan has always given utmost importance to the stellar and courageous struggle of Kashmiri leadership. It has denounced every Indian move which has incarcerated Hurriyat-Kashmiri leaders by holding them in illegal detention. It has also criticized Indian acts of imposing restrictions on their movement and imposed bans on their speeches. It has always supported the Hurriyat-Kashmiri leadership and taken every possible measure so that Kashmiri people could exercise their right to self-determination. The Indian government on the other hand has accused the Hurriyat-Kashmiri leadership of abetting Pakistan in fomenting trouble in the Kashmir valley. Since his election, prime minister Imran Khan addressed the Kashmiris and told them to consider him as their ambassador in Pakistan. He told the Kashmiris that he was a staunch supporter of Kashmir cause and Hurriyat-Kashmiri leadership. He categorically told the people of Kashmir that he would never make any deal with India on Kashmir without having on board all the Kashmiri leadership.

Resolution of Kashmir issue presents an opportunity for peace in the South Asian region. A looming nuclear threat, warmongering and spiteful political rhetoric present grave challenges for the regional peace. India by denying the Kashmiri people their right to self-determination has played with the fate of Kashmiris. It has inflicted indelible wounds on the socio-economic fabric of the Kashmiris. It has not allowed peace to hold any chance. This has resulted in an arms race in the region and halted the development of the entire South Asian region. Of late the Kashmir issue has picked new momentum. Amid the increasing oppression of Kashmiri people by Indian government, heroic struggle of Kashmiris shows no signs of abating. Pakistan has come out in full support of Kashmiri people and raised the Kashmir banner of peaceful resistance at all international forums. Through cautious diplomacy Pakistan can help the Kashmiris tremendously in their struggle for freedom. With no solution of the Kashmir issue, peace in the South Asian region would remain nightmare.



# **PAKISTAN'S DECLINING STATE INSTITUTIONS: CAN THERE BE ANY REVIVAL?**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Beleaguered state of institutions
- (c) Effects of institutional decline and performance of state institutions
  - (i) Plight of education sector
  - (ii) Dilapidated health system
  - (iii) Rotten judicial system and structure
  - (iv) Poor resource management
  - (v) Weak Irrigation system: Water management and storage
  - (vi) Weak institutional capacity
  - (vii) Public-private partnership
  - (viii) Report of World Bank on institutional decline
- (d) Causes of failure of state institutions
  - (i) Administratively redundant structure
  - (ii) Colonial legacy of extractive institutions
  - (iii) Overly big and lacking devolution
  - (iv) Disjointed: Overstaffed or understaffed
  - (v) Lack of recruitment on merit
  - (vi) Outdated administrative model
  - (vii) Failure of Civil service to be amenable to change
  - (viii) Inefficient delivery model and riddled with unnecessary tiers
  - (ix) Lack of capacity of government servants
  - (x) Lack of KPIs for an energetic workforce
  - (xi) Unresponsive work-force and feedback to
  - (xii) Delayed devolution and delegation of powers
  - (xiii) Corrupt officials and incidence of speed money
  - (xiv) Missing accountability in state institutions
  - (xv) Old-fashioned governance systems and lack of automation
  - (xvi) Based on consumption model
  - (xvii) Reforms ignored
  - (xviii) Loss in purposefulness and motivation of work-force
- (e) Reforms to revive institutions
  - (i) FBR reforms to strengthen economy
  - (ii) Introduction to automation in institutions
  - (iii) Capacity building in state institutions

- (iv) Civil service needs urgent reform
  - (v) Sense of ownership and purposefulness
  - (vi) Accountability and implementation of rules
  - (vii) Corruption to be controlled
  - (viii) Consistency in policy implementation and regular reforms
  - (ix) Devolution and delegation to be implemented
- (f) Conclusion

## ESSAY

The decline in performance of state institutions is hallmark of the beleaguered state of affairs which have led to decline in service delivery, efficiency and planning in these institutions. The cumulative performance of state institutions is reflective in the poor performance of the entire state. The lacklustre performance of state and state institutions has become synonymous. The performance of state institutions in Pakistan is plagued by inordinate delays, corruption, bypassing of rules, shady deals and political interventions for personal gain. State institutions have failed to live up to the promise of the ideals espoused by them. No relief or feedback is offered to the people to address their issues. Whether it is the issuance of an NOC or any routine letter, there can hardly be any certainty as to when the task would be completed. With losses running into billions, a redundant work-force, missed opportunities, ineffectual reforms and poor writ of these institutions, it seems hard to find a meaningful roadmap to revive these state institutions. State institutional failure affects the working of a state at social, psychological, financial, legal and moral level. A failed state unresponsive to its citizens loses its legitimacy to govern. Concerted efforts and a mix of rational reforms would be required to revive state institutions. Without positive contribution from state institutions, it would not be possible to ameliorate the prospects of the state in terms of competition and discharge of its responsibilities.

Pakistan's state institutions are in terrible shape. Notable institutional failures have occurred in the following spheres: power sector, tax collection, transport, aviation, education, health, policing, judiciary, etc. The state institutions under the umbrella of these spheres are performing pathetically low on all service delivery indicators since expenditure checks, revenue measures, utilization of human resource, accountability processes and performance evaluation are distorted beyond repair.

Ignoring institutional development and performance audit has been disastrous for the country. Pakistan's state institutions have been witness to decay at a rapid rate. Some scholars are of the view that the institutional decay cannot be reversed at any stage in present or future. The process of decay has exacted a heavy toll on efficiency and service delivery. State institutions are large behemoths which can be kept afloat only while they are performing well and earning profits. In case of losses these state institutions cannot remain viable and become huge liabilities. In case of Pakistan Steels, Railways, PIA, WAPDA, etc. institutional rot has set deep in their roots. Recovery seems remote, while turning these institutions to profitability could be a pipe dream.

In a well researched article by Sakib Sherani on "Institutional Reforms in Pakistan: The Missing Piece of the Development Puzzle" has highlighted some of the areas where state institutions have performed miserably. It states, the premier tax collection institute Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has a pathetic record. With barely two million income tax filers in a population of 200 million, tax revenue of the government (federal as well as provincial) amounts to less than 11 percent of the GDP. Astonishingly, personal income tax collection is less than 1.5 per cent of the GDP, amongst the lowest in the world. It means that FBR has no clue about the income of individuals in the large informal cash-based economy. It doesn't have an on field presence to estimate the flow of revenue through the banking system and in the informal cash economy.

In the education sector which has been lately devolved to the provinces, statistics paint a bleak picture. Regardless of the quality of education imparted, putting children into school seems a herculean task. Education of girls is even more problematic due to several factors. The gap between male and female child literacy is huge. The federal and provincial governments have failed to achieve the objective of universal primary



education for all children. An estimated 25 million school-age children are out of school in Pakistan – one of the highest proportions of relevant cohort in the world. The country's education budget amounts to a paltry 2 percent of the GDP, much of which is either absorbed by salaries or is subjected to misappropriation. In addition, poor institutional arrangements in some provinces lead to widespread cheating and exam paper "leakages" in national board-level exams. The combined effect is that overall educational outcomes and attainment are poor. The low spending on education, poor educational attainment, and lack of research in the country has undermined the quality of work-force required for achieving development prospects. A poorly equipped education sector can never lead to innovation and development of technologically sound industry. The outcomes of the educational sector are undetermined as they are not geared towards the sound development of industry and businesses.

Pakistan's health sector is incapable to address the challenges of a poverty-ridden population whose poverty has led to a decline in its health indicators. Lack of nutrition, access to health facilities, neglected maternal and neonatal care, unavailability of potable drinking water, absence of sanitation and sewerage issues have emboldened health issues amongst the most vulnerable segments of the population. Most of the burden is borne by tertiary healthcare facilities in hospitals located in large urban areas. Understaffed medical units, counterfeit medicine and overburdened health facilities are unable to cater to the health problems of a burgeoning population. Pakistan's total spending on the health sector amounts to an abysmal 0.7 percent of the GDP, or the equivalent of just US\$ 10.6 per capita per annum. As a result, many of the country's health statistics do not compare favourably with its income cohort.

The state of judicial system is far from enviable. It is interdependent heavily on the police department for policing matters along with other allied governance issues. Delay and hiccups at state level at the time of filing of appeal and investigation, dismissal for non-prosecution by the state agency often leads the entire judicial process astray. It has often been observed that litigation on frivolous issues and by unconcerned parties wastes precious judicial resources and time. Some reforms have been introduced in the judicial system. However, far more needs to be done. One study has observed "with only 3,967 judges in the entire judicial system (in all tiers of courts) for a population of 200 million people, there is one judge for over 50,000 citizens. Moreover, there are over 1.7 million cases pending in the courts, many awaiting judgment for years, if not decades. The figures don't encompass the remand backs and retrial cases as they pose additional burden on judicial functioning of the lower courts."

Pakistan is a resourceful country with a terrible management track record. It has not been able to tap its natural resources for economic development. Poor utilisation of Pakistan's considerable economic potential and endowment of natural resources is underscored by the state of affairs in the energy sector and the management of the country's considerable water resources. Against an identified potential of electricity generation of 35,721 MW using the country's hydel resources, current production (2020) is 8,500 MW – or a utilisation of 12 percent of potential. Using wind power, it is estimated that the country can produce 43,000 MW of electricity, almost twice the current installed capacity. So far by 2020, Pakistan has managed to produce 106 MW, or less than 0.25 percent of identified potential."

Pakistan has been blessed with a unique geostrategic position and geographical gradient. It has mighty peaks in its north, vast plains, deserts and irrigated areas in its south. Rivers originate in the north and straddle across the length and breadth of the country. According to an ADB report, the potential of Pakistan's water economy is more than \$45 billion. It can make resourceful use of its agricultural economy to earn precious foreign exchange. Instead of being a water resourceful country, Pakistan's water storage capacity is extremely low. While the United States has over 5,000 cubic metres of storage capacity per inhabitant, and China has 2,200 cubic metres, Pakistan has less than 150 cubic metres of storage capacity per capita. According to the World Bank, the dams of the Colorado and Murray-Darling Rivers in the US can hold 900 days of river runoff, while South Africa can store 500 days in its Orange River. India can store between 120 and 220 days of water in its major peninsular rivers. By contrast, Pakistan's storage capacity has declined to less than 30 days of water in the Indus basin.

Since 1947 state institutions are declining at a rapid pace. Some exceptions have been pointed out by observers who think that regulatory authorities such as PEMRA, OGRA, NEPRA, CAA, SECP, etc. are examples of good performers. However, what these authors miss is that none of these institutions are dealing

with field work. These institutions are working as administrative head offices with no liability to look after field work other than regulation. Meanwhile, field offices face multiple problems from staff shortages to untrained work-force to lack of institutional capacity. As a result, state institutions lack the capacity to make implementation of complex projects.

Another area where weak institutional capacity manifests itself is in the inability to complete "transformation" initiatives (such as modernisation of the economy/diversification of exports, creating the basis for a knowledge driven economy, etc.), or in the number of years for nationally-important, "strategic" initiatives (increasing the share of renewable energy in the overall mix, for example) to reach fruition. Three examples demonstrate this. Pakistan established the Alternative Energy Board (AEB) in 2007 to facilitate the promotion of renewable energy generation. It has taken 10 years for the first solar and wind power plants to be set up (attributed mainly to lack of capacity to set tariffs for renewable projects). Ten years on, the share of renewables in the total energy mix is a meagre 1.7 percent. In India, the share has gone up to 17.5 percent in roughly the same time period, with plans to raise it to 40 per cent by 2030. The Pakistan Horticulture Development and Export Board (PHDEB) was set up in 2003 to promote exports from this avenue. In 14 years since it has been set up, horticulture exports have moved from US\$ 175 million to an estimated US\$ 641 million (2015-16). Kenya's fresh produce exports, on the other hand, have touched US\$ 1 billion in around the same period from virtually zero, with exports of fresh cut flowers capturing roughly 30 percent of world market share."

Public-private partnerships are launched throughout the world to boost participation of businesses and stakeholders who can pool resources besides the government. Pakistan has marginal success in public-private partnerships because of shaky public policies and uncertain political environments. It has often flirted with the idea of privatization of electricity companies, steel mills and national carrier. It also started a business train with the help of private parties to make some profitable business. In order to promote the use of the public-private partnership (PPP) model in infrastructure development, a writer observes, "after a successful experience with Independent Power Producers in the 1990s, an Infrastructure Project Development Facility (IPDF) was set up in the mid-2000s under the Ministry of Finance. However, till date, virtually no major infrastructure project outside power has been successfully undertaken in the PPP mode (barring the Hyderabad-Mirpurkhas highway section). In India, which gave an impetus to infrastructure development under PPP at around the same time as Pakistan (the mid-2000s), over 800 major projects have been undertaken, according to the World Bank with an estimated combined project cost of US\$ 60-80 billion."

Pakistan's institutional performance since 1996 onwards can be analysed using a "standard" measure, such as the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI). An assessment of the period prior to this can only be done in a somewhat subjective manner in the absence of a robust, widely-used measurement tool. The main advantage of the WGI data set is that it tracks and measures six components of "governance" using a consistent methodology over a period of time. In addition, by reporting on a wide range of countries, it provides a basis for relative/cross-country comparisons. Since 1996, Pakistan has performed poorly on all six sub-components of governance measured by the WGI — voice, rule of law, control of corruption, accountability, regulatory quality and political stability/absence of violence and terrorism.

State institutions have become administratively redundant over the years as they have not reformed their administrative structures, job portfolios and division of work among different hierarchical positions. Many state institutions such as WAPDA, PIA, FBR, Railways etc. are colonial legacies. They were formed at a time when capitalist market was infant and evolving at a slow pace. Market competition was benign. There were few competitors and information systems were hardly available to give feedback on the performance of these state institutions. Population growth was slow and economic activities were limited to few sectors which reduced burden on these institutions. With the passage of time population grew at an alarming rate and economic activities diversified into various new fields. Competition among various market forces paved the way for market competitors to become more reliant on the state institutions. However, complacency, lack of planning and foresight on the part of the state prevented the evolution, reform and expansion of the state institutions. The state institutions didn't embrace new administrative functions. They didn't organize themselves on modern lines to move towards a more robust work-force, introduce rapid performance based reward and compensation system. They remained wedded to colonial system of service structure with few changes made over the years.



The colonial administrative system inherited by many state institutions was often termed as the steel structure that formed the bedrock of state and enabled it to run its affairs. This administrative structure was termed efficient initially but later scholarship suggested that it was far from satisfactory. It contacted a very small portion of the population and was highly extractive. It was meant for a low skilled, economically restricted and semi-literate population. Power was concentrated in the hand of a few individuals making decisions for large swathes of populations. The promotion system was not based on performance. It was based on seniority on the basis of recruitment and no key performance indicators were adopted to make people responsible for their jobs. Capacity building and skill enhancement was restricted to a small officer lot whereas lower tier jobs lacked proper trainings, timely promotion and adequate reward and compensation.

Overly big structures of state institutions have brought key decision-making to a grinding halt. It is often debated that these institutions would crumble under their own heavy weight. Overly centralized decision-making has not allowed regional offices to improve their efficiency and performance over the years. Multiple operational tiers have made it difficult to have access to the facilities provided by these organizations. There has remained an opacity surrounding the working and functioning of these institutions. There has been no real time complaint management system that could address the complaints of people. The best the state has come up with regard to addressing the grievances of people regarding these institutions is establishment of offices of regional, provincial and federal ombudsman.

The huge structures of these state institutions are an indictment of their failure to institute any institutional reforms over the years. The distribution of work among the work-force of these organizations has broken down. In many instances many people are working for redundant positions. On the other hand, there isn't enough skilled and trained staff for key positions. A bloated work-force signifies these state institutions. Ironically, these bloated organizations are understaffed when it comes to trained and skilled work-force. This disjoint has been engendered due to lack of clarity in maintaining a trained work-force, prioritizing capacity building and institution reforms on regular basis.

Ignoring a fair recruitment process based on merit has led to decline of state institutions. There is truth to this proposition because candidates unsuited for a job when recruited were not able to grasp the responsibilities conferred by the job. A compromise made by the recruiters earned them undue benefits and hindered them from discharging their services impartially. Moreover, recruiters could not follow rules and regulations in letter in spirit to enforce service delivery. Candidates recruited through an unfair process failed to form a viable work-force. In the absence of institutional checks, the energies of the institutions were focused on non-issues and quality service delivery suffered.

The classic bureaucratic model proposed by Max Weber has become outdated. When it was first formulated it was a rigid, authoritative and role specific model wherein state institutes discharge their functions to achieve limited ends. It was not participative and didn't heed to the aspirations of common masses. The various tiers and commands it created were not flexible. The colonial set-up bequeathed this outdated system to Pakistan at the time of its independence. Initially, the system without participation of masses yielded some favourable results. But as businesses and flux of population migration took place, they started to perform poorly. It needs to be mentioned here that various scholars have mentioned the decline of civil service as the harbinger towards failed institutions. They are of the opinion that once corruption started to take roots in institutions, their decline became inevitable. However, a key component of the argument is self-defeating in this instance. Recruitment of candidates to officer ranks through meritorious exams won't alone solve the plague that has set in. The lower supporting staff also needs to be recruited on merit without political intervention. An upright chain of command belonging to officers stands little chance to help matters when the subordinate staff is making compromises or indulging in corruption for petty gains. The policy errors that were only centric toward officer cadre ought to share some blame for the decline of these state institutions.

Civil service in the early history of the country delivered meritorious services to the state at the federal and provincial levels and remained impartial. Its structure still remained rigid and based on the colonial set-up inherited from the British. It needs to be considered that during the early 20th century, USA, UK and Germany carried out several necessary administrative reforms to align their bureaucracies with growing populations, business interests and governance imperatives. The journey from 1947-1970 saw economic development but civil service started seeing its decline during the same period. The Zulfikar Ali Bhutto era from 1973-1977 saw

the constitutional guarantees granted to officers recruited through civil service stripped away. New vertical and horizontal recruitments were made into the civil service during this period which ultimately paved way for political interference and cronyism. Moreover, during the Zia era no meaningful reforms and pay increases were made in the civil service cadre. The arrival of a rapidly expanding private sector attracted more brilliant minds as compared to the civil service. Civil service also lost its share in power to new power brokers with the passage of time as awareness increased. It lacks a trained and professionally sound work-force. Without systemic meaningful reforms, it cannot be expected from a deaying civil service to deliver.

Inefficiency due to multiple tiers, absence of timelines and target-oriented work has defined the performance of state institutions for much of their history. Unnecessary rules and lack of integration among departments has made it difficult for people to have access to state services. Regrettably, rules are enacted in such a manner that they are totally divorced from the realities prevailing on ground. A lot of precious time is squandered by middle tiers in decision-making to resolve knotty issues. The broader issue of power centralization and decision-making is often ignored. This leads to delays, hiccups and policy failures.

A key area where government has failed miserably is the development of a competitive, capable and professional human work-force. It has been said that old ways won't lead to new destinations. Precisely stated, the tenure-based promotion, no assessment of skills, ritualistic trainings, and absence of performance evaluation benchmarks for next assignment are killing the competitive environment in the civil service. The skills and professionalism available in the private sector is far better than that in the public state institutions. The reward, perk and promotion system is not based on skill acquisition and service delivery. The rigidity of the administrative structure kills motivation as skill enhancement doesn't lead to promotion and salary increase. Knowingly aware that prospects of any elevation in prospects would be denied saps the motivation of employees. Trainings are often not based on merit and are narrowly awarded. Field trainings are often reserved for the officer cadre and supporting staff is denied capacity building opportunities. Trainings are often used by superior officers and management in the bureaucracy to win favours of junior officers. Merit is often sidelined to favour those officers who could fall in line for an opportune time to come.

The entire design of civil service is not based on any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or goals set for the organization. Formulating KPIs for gauging performance is often deliberate and without any cognizance of field realities. On field difficulties and challenges are such that it is not always possible to follow KPIs. The other issue is misreporting and fudging of data by government offices or the previous occupant in the post to report positively report on KPIs. It could be entirely possible that the overly exaggerated performance can never be paralleled or exceeded. These two factors could make KPIs redundant as they could remain elusive or factually misleading.

State institutions are notorious for being unresponsive towards the queries of people. Problems faced by people when brought for redress are addressed at a snail's pace. No outcome is shared with the complainants. There is no mechanism to share feedback. No wonder it has become an axiom living through ages that whenever when one encounters state institutions one is left humiliated and ignored. This non-serious attitude of state institutions has been a work in progress since many years. This has cast a bad name on their performance and earned them disrepute. General perception about state institutions is that they are not helpful on any matter.

Centralization has been the hallmark of governing through a strong centre since independence. Prior to the enactment of 18th Amendment in 2010, the federal government always played the role of regulating the affairs of the provinces for more than 65 years. Regrettably, the provinces couldn't empower their bureaucracies to mould them as high-powered institutions geared towards service delivery. Devolution of powers to local governments remained elusive and no delegation was made to local government tiers. This has led to twofold problems. Firstly, the local political dispensation has to look toward the provincial legislature to get its issues resolved and have access to grants. It cannot raise its own revenues and enact laws to govern its own matters. Secondly, the sustainable governance model remains a pipe dream as participation and empowerment of local population is not possible. Ironically, democratically elected governments have conveniently ignored devolution and delegation to consolidate their grip on power and rule through the provincial secretariats by emboldening the office of district collectors.

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Corruption has often been highlighted by many economists as the root cause of frail institutions. It has been designated as the mother of all economic evils. It has been alleged that every institutional malaise stems from its scourge. It is understandable that in the absence of any counter narrative corruption would have to shoulder the blame for the pervasive institutional rut. The proponents of corruption as a mother of all organizational evils believe that corruption in any organization manifests itself in many ways. It can be in the form of a conflict of interest through which a contract is awarded to a favourite. It can be about awarding promotion to an undeserved candidate in exchange for monetary benefit. It can be speed money to go fast track and bypass red tape surrounding frivolous rules and regulation. It can be in the form of awarding vacancies to only those candidates who make bribes. It is argued that corruption makes compromises on rules and regulations, meritocracy and quality of human resource. It leads to substandard recruitment of human resource and enables managers to bend rules or ignore rules in their favour.

Accountability of employees employed by state institutions is a cause for serious concern among policymakers and planners. State institutions have a terrible record in terms of holding people accountable for their sins of omission and commission. There are no mechanisms in state institutions that could hold its employees responsible for living beyond means, using illegal means to achieve promotion, using their positions to gain tangible or intangible material benefits or using their authority to make ill-gotten wealth. Inspection with allied institutions is not carried out to determine the scope of accountability drive. No investigations are undertaken to uproot corruption and malpractices within the departments. The perception that accountability process would either be witch-hunt or a terrible waste of time has also weakened interest in the accountability process. It has allowed a *carte blanche* to those who successfully evade any accountability drive initiated against them.

State institutions have tried to use automation to improve their business processes and working. Many automation systems have been implemented which have the capacity to re-engineer interaction and work among the entire organization. Regrettably, cheap human resource has often prevented productive use of automation and its implementation. Another issue with flawed automation solutions is that it has often been introduced in half-baked manner. It distorts the original system and makes functioning more uncertain and unreliable. Various studies have highlighted the fact that automation ought to be done in keeping with the unique needs of any state institution. Moreover, reorganization and remodelling has also destroyed the smooth functioning of various institutions. The process of automation must entail reorganization of task and job assigned. Sadly, blanket automation implementation has caused irreparable loss by abolishing key functional tiers and making precious human resource redundant.

State institutions have embraced a consumption model relying heavily on doles out and bail outs offered by successive governments. Most of the state institutions have relied on the narrow whims of political considerations to generate employment and recruit party workers. They have not become self-reliant and failed to generate their own revenues. Power has predominantly lied on the expenditure side of state institutions as it allowed managers to cater to their own self-aggrandizement and personal gains. This consumption model has dealt a fatal blow to the development and evolution of state institutions. They remained dependent on donors and surgical reforms which could hardly make a difference to their performance.

Reform process is lifeline of all living state institutions. Reforms to boost capacity of human resource, improve working conditions, increase rewards and salaries commensurate with capability and to optimize performance have not been given adequate importance. Even where reforms have been made they have been haphazard transplants divorced from the actual need of these faltering institutions. New Public Management is a branch of organizational development economics that looks specifically at the performance and various needs of an organization. It is a dedicated research field that advises turnkey solutions, reorganization and differential focus to improve performance of public sector institutions. No trace of a thoroughly researched reform process can be found to help these state institutions to stand on their feet again.

The effects of institutional decline and failure spell doom for its members. Often an argument is made whether the institution matters or the individual matters. Institutions are composed of individuals, values, rituals and norms. The culture of an institution is shaped through the interaction of individuals. As institutions decline they also affect the growth prospects of individuals. Capacity building prospects are reduced. Politics,

nepotism and favouritism take root as individuals scramble for protection or try to keep themselves abreast of latest changes in the field dynamics. Some individuals fall in line and succumb to nefarious activities and pollute the environment of the institutions. Loss of motivation and purposefulness further saps the energy of individuals dissuading them from making precious contribution to the organization.

Bold policy measures would have to be adopted to revive decaying state institutions. It could include breaking them down into smaller, functionally viable units. The process of rebuilding institutions should be focused and should work in tandem with policy formulation and execution to achieve the objectives of institutional revival.

The foremost task should be reforming the tax bureaucracies at federal and provincial levels to generate excess revenue to run the affairs of the federal and provincial governments. FBR is responsible for collecting revenue at federal level whereas respective provincial revenue departments are responsible to collect revenues at provincial levels. The major chunk of revenue comes from FBR which earns around Rs.4 trillion for the federation and transfers Rs.2.7 trillion to the provinces. The problem arises as FBR earns less in terms of revenue for the state and the expenditures of the state are far greater than its revenues. The problem lies with FBR which has not evolved as a robust tax bureaucracy and has failed to achieve its objective to broaden the tax net, increase number of active business filers, tap revenue from new taxation measures and prevent tax evasion and avoidance. A rigorous reform process should be initiated in FBR to increase capacity of its work-force, make it a smart organization, introduce automation, permanently do away with the SRO culture, and reduce the incidence of corruption in the organization.

In the absence of meaningful reforms, economic revival seems a remote prospect. Often policy-makers have tried to attract businesses by giving tax breaks, exemptions, and credits. However, the real focus on ease of doing business and integration of the economy has never been prioritized. Digital economy is now the new revolution as world economy integrates with vast business chains on finger tips. A way forward in this direction would be to introduce reforms in the banking, communication and public institutions which interact with businesses. Multiple forums and channels should be reduced to bare minimum so that a business can have minimum interact with state institutions and focuses exclusively on earning revenues and paying back its share of taxes. It should be ensured that utilities would be provided seamlessly along with security and access to all basic amenities.

State institutions need an energetic and highly capable work-force. Capacity building and diversification of experience should be the top priority of any reform process. A talented, well equipped, handsomely paid and rewarded work-force would be a better contributor than a work-force which is compensated way less than its potential and capability. Value addition by employees of state institutions would increase when their talent and efforts would be recognized.

The structure of civil service has become outdated and requires new management paradigms to make it a viable structure. It is a fact that civil service attracts best minds of the country. However, these trainings are not in sync with the ground realities and the resources that they would encounter in the field formations. Imagine Pakistan Post, Railways, PIA, etc. outsmarted by private sector companies such as TCS, Daewoo, Airblue having stellar performance. Reforms should target division of labour, staff training, provision of office facilities, reward and compensation as per performance and promotions on achieving targets. It has often been argued that the rigid cadre system of civil service creates unnecessary decision tiers that add to delay and redundancy. Economic opportunity to reinvent new posts in the civil service ought to be considered to make service delivery efficient. Moreover, civil service is generalist in nature and lacks specialization to meet the challenges of modern corporate world. Reforms in this grey area should be prioritized to build the capacity of employees of these state institutions so they remain highly competitive and update on the latest changes required to improve failing institutions and weakening civil service.

A sense of purposefulness and ownership needs to be inculcated among the staff of state institutions so that they discharge their responsibilities with utmost faith. Reforms should specifically target areas where the feedback of staff and lower tier-managers make their contribution. Organizational values and targets should be set in such a manner that contribution of every person should matter. Studies have shown that any reform process that ignores role assignment and the outcome related to that performance tends to lower the morale of



the employees. When a sense of futility regarding the outcome of a performance prevails among the employees then it is hard to motivate them through rewards or perks.

Accountability process in state institutions has often been hushed up or never initiated. Reforms are direly needed in institutions to empower institutional accountability process. Regrettably, other than some departmental proceedings for lack of efficiency, poor performance, misappropriation of funds or failure to follow due process and rules in awarding a contract, no meaningful benchmarks are taken to set the contours of the accountability process. As a starter information regarding filing of returns, investments in assets, banking transactions, ownership of house, car, and movable assets ought to be obtained from employees and other institutions to corroborate the living standard of the employee. People who have key decision power ought to be checked on regular basis to verify whether they are living within their means. Meanwhile, facilities and perks should be given in tangible form so that posting of fake expenditure could be avoided.

Corruption needs to be weeded out from state institutions through a robust accountability process. However, the process of elimination of corruption can only gain traction once the volume of corruption could be determined. So far there exist only perceptions against the pervasion of corruption in different state institutions. In cash based economy where substantiating money trail is difficult, it is hard to uproot corruption just through enacting strict laws. Reforms should specifically target tiers that lead to delay of official work; which force people to pay bribes to get their work done. Discretionary authority ought to be diluted and eliminated by enacting clear and simple rules. Complexity of rules needs to be simplified so that ordinary people could have a grasp of the requirements proposed by rules and regulations.

Regular reforms are features of countries which are aware of the growing complexities of modern life and viability of institutions. A consistent policy at federal and provincial level ought to be enacted that conducts research on different institutions and suggests changes in their business and management processes. Competition in market forces institutions to adopt new solutions and embrace challenges. Since many state institutions operated as monopolies for far too long, they thought that they would get away with their poor performance and government would keep bailing them out. This attitude closed doors on reforms and lead to tunnel vision. The need of the hour is to organize public-private partnerships to revive these institutions. Managers from reputable private organizations need to be brought to improve the working of these institutions and improve upon reporting mechanisms and work culture. A consistency needs to be achieved in implementation of reforms. Moreover, transplant reforms which have succeeded in some different regions may not be bought wholesale and implemented without any forethought. The process of reform should be inclusive and in keeping with all the ground realities.

Devolution of powers in the institutions at various levels needs to be reworked to solve power asymmetry. Reforms should cater to devolution of power to new assignments and empower new cadres. This would pave the way for more responsibility among the employees and help in holding people accountable for their sins of omission and commission. Similarly, delegation of functions to different cadres would ease the burden on the managerial offices and spread the influence of the organization. Modern organizations can be made smart and slim by splintering their size and introducing the process of devolution and delegation. Research strongly suggests that small teams and trimmed departments can work as productive models and boost efficiency and productivity. It is therefore need of the hour that seriousness must be displayed to break large inefficient institutions into small viable and efficient entities.

Institutional decline needs to be arrested immediately to save the future of the country. Economic development and progress can never be realized by using old and unresponsive institutions. Public institutions in Pakistan are in terrible shape and they ought to be resuscitated to support a burgeoning population and a developing economy. If reforms are not introduced then precious talent would go waste. The proverbial all is grist that comes to its mill would stand true to the testimony of bad institutions wasting precious human resource. It is high time to rise to the occasion and reform dying institutions.

# **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: WAY FORWARD TO NATIONAL SUCCESS & PROGRESS**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Why backwardness of women in society
  - (i) Women participation in different fields
  - (ii) Cultural barriers and lack of awareness
  - (iii) Patriarchal mindset against empowerment of women
  - (iv) Different forms of abuse
  - (v) Sexual and physical harassment
  - (vi) Pathetic criminal justice system
  - (vii) Failure of political process to empower women
  - (viii) Lack of women representation in political process
- (c) How to empower women
  - (i) Initiate reform process
  - (ii) Strengthening of women empowerment departments
  - (iii) More share for women education
  - (iv) Special quota in employment
  - (v) Financial concessions for women
  - (vi) Tax credits and concessions
  - (vii) Access to information technology
  - (viii) End to violence against women
  - (ix) Repeal of regressive laws
  - (x) Special focus on women health
- (d) Conclusion

Pakistan has fared poorly over the years in empowering women in its society. Women comprise more than 51 percent of its population but their contribution in different areas leaves much to be desired. A regressive patriarchal culture, lack of economic incentives and absence of equal opportunities have prevented women from realizing their true potential. In different walks of life, social participation, economic contribution and political representation, women's role has been restricted or confined to oblivion. Women routinely encounter violence, discrimination, rejection, harassment and domestic abuse. Scant attention is given to their health, education and economic independence. There are laws that promise women sanctity of equal rights but there are very few mechanisms which ensure where their grievances are addressed. As a progressive country without ensuring equal participation of women in all segments of life the ideals enshrined in the constitution can never be realized.

Women participation in different fields varies on the basis of cultural restrictions imposed on them. They are part of the domestic labour force, nursing, education, bureaucracy and private sector. Literacy rate among women belonging to different classes of the society working in different professions varies greatly. Lower class female labour is poverty ridden, lacking assets, a permanent source of income and education. Skill



level of lower class women is very low which often means that they can't earn beyond a certain amount during their entire life span. Abysmal maternal healthcare and high fertility rate aggravates health and sustenance issue among lower class women. They often suffer domestic abuse and violence at the hands of their male guardians. An economic and social bondage surrounds the survival of low class women. They are often engaged in agriculture, domestic work and low tier employment which don't empower them economically and socially. Lack of quality education and awareness subjects them to a vicious economic cycle.

Cultural barriers and lack of awareness and government intervention to improve plight of women across different economic segments has led to marginalization of women in the society. A patriarchal society has given reins of power and financial power to men. The concept of breadwinner revolves around men who often support an extended family system. This unique role gave them clout to decide matters for male and female kids and members of the family differently. Males were patronized and females were subjugated. Males were prioritized and females were relegated to mundane work. Males were educated and females were not given adequate education to make them functional members of the society. The treatment meted out to women showed that they were children of lesser gods incapable of deciding on their own or making any independent choice.

Ingrained in the patriarchal mindset is the societal norm to hush matters related to women dignity. Regressive norms have often led to treating women as tradable commodities to protect honor and prestige among the clans. It remained acceptable to silence dissenting women who cried about rape or sexual harassment. Public shame revolving around women victimhood has remained an insurmountable obstacle. It is felt as if reporting sexual harassment or violence would taint the reputation of the victim.

Across all classes of society women face abuse in different forms. Male dominance has kept power in the hands of men who have tried to maintain status quo by denying women their due share. Cultural laws have put responsibility on women for any wrongdoing of men. Domestic violence attracts victims from all classes of women. It starts in the form of physical and mental abuse and finally leads to violence. Often salaries of women workers are withheld or they are given extra work as punishment or physical torture. Many a time incidents of physical abuse go unreported because of a regressive system that doesn't allow women to come forward. In case a complaint is registered by a woman for violence against her then she finds it hard to find the correct forum where she can get relief.

Sexual harassment at workplace, streets and public places is a grave threat to the independence of women and respect for their space. The public shaming and blaming the victim for inviting trouble is deeply ingrained in the mindset of the society which demoralizes victims to report this egregious offence against them. There still exists a rotten sexist belief in society that it is woman who should be held responsible for any act of sexual harassment against it. Similarly, there are some non-specific laws against harassment at workplace, streets and public spaces. The very fact that specific acts of individuals can be construed as sexual harassment makes it difficult to legislate on the issue. Although sexual harassment is more readily detectable in streets and public spaces, yet most of the incidents go unreported. In the same vein it is even more difficult to detect sexual harassment at workplace despite existence of laws on the statute book to protect women. Often it starts from exchange of favours against work and sharing responsibilities ultimately leading to break-up or allegation of harassment. Powerful men use their clout to grant women favours in promotions, rewards and secure position in exchange for intimacy and sexual advances.

The criminal justice system with all its bias against women has attracted interventions from lawmakers, politicians and judges. It has been tried to gauge its performance in terms of real time service delivery for decades, but to no avail. It has not setup exclusive offices and portals where women can register their complaints. It has miserably failed to spread awareness among the downtrodden and marginalized women communities. Fact of the matter is that there are few exclusive women commanded courts, police stations and ombudswomen offices. No exclusive timelines have been made explicit to give women timely relief. Only knee-jerk actions are taken in case of extreme incidents. Often in case of juvenile rape, honour killing or sexual harassment action is taken by the courts. As a showpiece action, selective amendments are made to laws, often thrust upon the public when an incident arouses national uproar, which often serves to prove that women's

empowerment, instead of being crafted through policy-based structural reform, is based on populist sentiment of justice and punishment.

Political parties include agenda of women empowerment in their election manifestoes only as eye catchers to attract more voters in their favour. They decorate their manifestos with promises of ushering in a new era for the unrepresented half of Pakistan's population. Regrettably, their plans never leave the drawing board as they rarely have dedicated teams within their ranks who actually work on a roadmap for implementation of plans dedicated to uplift women. As is the case for most political parties they never keep a watchdog to keep a politically neutral check on elected governments' election promises. Therefore, most women empowerment reforms either get muddled in bureaucratic red tape or never see the light of day. Laws are passed without careful debate, and one is faced with the eternal question that has haunted most of Pakistan's development gurus: how will it be implemented, and who will do it?

Political culture of forgetfulness plays a huge role in dishonouring the promises made during the election. It highlights the sad reality that either populist pledges are too idealistic to be attained or women just don't factor in the power equation. A grave reality about poor representation of women candidates in senate, national assembly and key positions in political parties speaks volumes about the seriousness shown toward women empowerment. Women have been given special quotas in government jobs and reserved seats in federal and provincial assemblies to boost their participation. In cases where women legislators are ambitious about getting full scale women rights, there ensues an inevitable clash between what these representatives want versus what they get from the state machinery. It may seem odd but it turns out that it is unfair to demand reform from a system designed on the foundations of male dominance. It seems unlikely that already stretched departments tasked with implementing new agendas and reforms will inevitably result in a flawed product for the people.

Implementation of women reforms starts from rural sector and gradually moves to the urban centres. It is ironic that various government tiers which could easily have made a difference in the plight of women remain defunct at rural level. A proactive tehsil, union council and district government can be effective in engaging women in different social and economic activities. Awareness campaigns and skilled training contact drives can be launched to engage women. But over centralized government tiers have made the process cumbersome and have killed any initiative left behind after passing through excessive bureaucratic redtapism.

Women development departments dedicated to reform process in Pakistan are barely financed with budgets to match their ambitions, plans and strategy. Left unaddressed and unattended they mostly confine themselves to planning events for International Women's Day. There are departments in all provinces which are dedicated exclusively to women issues. What is lacking in these departments is a culture of importance given to women affairs. Multiple forums for women related issues often hamper coordination among these departments. In the absence of integration it is hard to connect with onground issues in real time and provide genuinely implementable solutions. It feels that a specialised cadre for women-specific development has become overdue.

Women empowerment can be realised by giving women more share in education and technical vocation with the help of local, provincial, federal and national governments. Participation of women in education is far from satisfactory. Enrolment rate among female students is the lowest and absenteeism is highest. Educational prospects for women get worse as one move from industrialized districts to non-industrialized poor districts. Presently, various tiers of the government have collaborated with donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to increase enrolment and quotas of female students. Women representation is gradually being increased in schools, colleges and universities.

Employment age relaxation has been introduced by federal and provincial governments to increase participation of women. Similarly, quotas have also been fixed in National and provincial assembly to augment the presence of women; to increase awareness regarding issues related to women empowerment; and to provide women with a level playing field. A sizeable majority of women population is employed in the services and education sector. Moreover, unaccounted contribution of non-working women in households forms a significant portion of domestic GDP. It is imperative to increase employment and entrepreneurship



among women in society. Women chambers of commerce have been opened in all provinces and in many commercial hubs of the country. A robust contribution of women to economy can only be achieved through the participation of women in society.

Financial independence for women should be the manifesto of every political party if they want to make women a viable part of society. More contact programmes ought to be launched at tehsil, district and provincial levels such to improve economic participation of women. Skill development seminars, councils and clubs should be launched to increase participation and capacity building of women. Benazir Income and Support Programme (BISP) is a social safety net that can be readily used to profile women in need of assistance. It can be made more targeted to have access to households which need financial, skill or educational assistance. It can also target single mother family or families exclusively dependent on female contribution. Moreover, government can ensure interest free credit facility for women startups to begin business and employ more women.

Government should launch special initiatives for the economic empowerment of women. It can collaborate with international organisations, use multilateral forums to better train women and explore new avenues to engage women as responsible members of the society. It can pass tax laws which can give special exemptions and reduced tax rate options to women entrepreneurs. It can announce tax holiday, give tax credit on the basis of equal opportunity employment and additional hiring of female staff. It can engage with small and medium industries that can help new women owned startups. Women chamber of commerce can be exclusively dedicated to help women launch their businesses and improve upon ease of doing business.

Information technology (IT) has made it easy to come up with data that can help in tabulating different age groups; analyse income earned by women belonging to different areas, districts provinces, which can be helpful in removal of disparities, etc. The advent of digital economics has made it convenient to teach language, tools and skills which can be learned at any stage of life. The use of IT can be coupled with digital economy to enable women to earn a living for themselves. Women can work from home and use digital platform to save precious time and money and make a bankable investment. Various brands help new startups with advertisement revenue to run their affairs. New ideas and avenues can be explored in the services sector by women working in entertainment, hospitality, restaurant, education and fashion industry, etc. Government can help women immensely by providing them with free laptops, Internet connection, online marketing and trading trainings. It can also provide them with a web domain which can automatically translate web pages in Urdu.

Violence against the women in domestic sphere needs to be eliminated to enable women to contribute meaningfully to the economic and social empowerment of women. Federal and provincial governments have passed certain laws which give women protection and a mechanism to report any incidence of violence against them. However, these laws lack implementation and redress. Implementation mechanisms need to be expanded and empowered. A responsive work-force, adequate feedback and persistent contact process needs to be initiated to reduce instances of violence against women. The fact that domestic violence is largely unreported and victims belonging to different social backgrounds stomach violence needs to be made culturally unacceptable. Without any change in societal norms, there are few chances if women empowerment could realistically usher in the society.

Repressive and outdated laws are a stumbling block in the path of women empowerment. Panchayat laws sanction honour killings or trading of women as collateral for any offence committed by men. Despite state laws prohibiting honour killings, fact is that women still get killed in the name of honour fixed by men. It is need of the hour to raise awareness for violence against women, honour killing and discrimination. Help of civil society and government is required to make justice accessible for women. Implementation of laws needs to be improved with careful legislation to include the suggestions of women leaders and statesmen.

Women health is complex and neglected at the cost of its immense importance. Regrettably, most issues of maternal health are not addressed due to lack of awareness, access to medical facilities and sparsely located rural health centres. The toll exacted by poor health of women decreases their contribution to the family and to society. In addition to the disproportionate presence of health facilities for women, availability of women

healthcare centres differs from province to province. In some rural areas, healthcare facilities are better due to their proximity to large urban centres. This anomaly in location of healthcare centre needs to be removed as more and more centres ought to be built in rural and urban health centres. Provincial health bureaucracies would need to come forward to shoulder their responsibilities. They can initiate process of reform by engaging lady health workers who can advise on several important areas wherein women health can be improved. Regular medical checkups and better nutrition can improve women health prospects.

The socio-cultural system needs to gear toward women empowerment. No progress can be achieved as long as both wheels of the society start working in sync with each other. The need of the hour is to give women more space, financial and cultural independence to select their careers, marry at their will and choose any set of beliefs. More employment opportunities need to be created for women in different fields. The age old narrative that it's a man's world no longer appeals to reason. Women are good as professionally as are men. They ought to be treated at par in the eyes of justice and any societal injustices against them should be eradicated immediately. This is the only clear recipe for progress of women, society and country.



# **18TH AMENDMENT AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS FOR FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL HARMONY**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Key changes in the constitution through the 18th Amendment
  - (i) Revival of CCI
  - (ii) Revival of National Economic Council
- (c) Positive impact of the 18th Amendment
  - (i) Provincial autonomy realized
  - (ii) Greater focus on welfare
  - (iii) Efforts to improve coordination among provinces
  - (iv) Financial independence and tax revenue generation
- (d) Pitfalls of 18th Amendment:
  - (i) Hasty transfer of functions to provinces
  - (ii) Issue of human resource of ministries devolved to provinces
  - (iii) Issue of policy coordination among provinces and centre
  - (iv) Nation building neglected
  - (v) Policy confusion
  - (vi) Disjointed tax policy and lack of coordination between provinces and centre
- (e) Conclusion

## **ESSAY**

The 18th Amendment has been a watershed in the constitutional history of Pakistan in terms of the benefits and challenges posed by its enactment. It has introduced profound changes in the constitution of Pakistan. It has been passed after two years of deliberations. It has achieved historic consensus and expressed the willingness of various political parties and stakeholders to reach out towards political reconciliation. It has been hailed as a step in achieving the true ideals of the 1973 constitution by making provinces autonomous. It promises financial independence of provinces and reduction of political alienation which has been a cause of irritation in the presence of an overbearing centre for many years. However, recently criticism has surfaced stating that 18th Amendment falters on the counts of nation building, fiscal imbalance created at federal level, a united stand against terrorism, lack of service delivery on the part of state and lack of coordination among provinces. It has been alleged that 18th Amendment contains some divisive issues which are detrimental for the survival of state and its survival. All these misapprehensions are unfounded as they distrust the process of political reconciliation and coordination.

The 18th Amendment has been a major overhaul of the Constitution of 1973. It has introduced changes to about 36 percent of the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan: 102 out of 280 Articles of the Constitution were amended, inserted, added, substituted or deleted. In addition, 47 items on the Concurrent Legislative List have been removed and moved to the provincial legislative domain. As a result, some seventeen federal ministries and divisions including ministry of planning, industry, agriculture and rural development, social services and

welfare including social protection stand abolished. It has abolished the Concurrent Legislative List in which prior to the 18th Amendment both federal and provincial governments could legislate. It has sought to strengthen institutions of intergovernmental coordination and conflict resolution between the federal and provincial government through the revival of the Council of Common Interests (CCI) and making the National Economic Council (NEC). It gave the provinces VAT tax on services and to expand their tax base in order to realise the potential of their revenue bases. It also clipped the powers of centre to impose emergency rule in provinces. Moreover, it allowed the provinces to borrow from market, private banks and make international deals on trade and investment. As a result the Amendment, opened door for greater access to capital finance by permitting both internal and external borrowing by the provinces subject to limitations imposed by the National Economic Council.

The 18th constitutional amendment has made two important changes in the institutions of intergovernmental coordination at the federal and provinces government level. It has revived the roles of Council of Common Interests and strengthened provincial representation at the National Economic Council. It had jurisdiction over Federal Legislative List and electricity and was intended to serve as forum to seek provincial input in the conduct of federal responsibilities. It was chaired by the prime minister or by a federal minister on his behalf and had equal membership from the federal and the provincial governments. The 18th Amendment reinvigorated this institution to deal with selected matters of commonalities between the federation and the provinces. The latest composition of the CCI comprises chairmanship by the prime minister and four provincial chief ministers and three federal government nominees as members. The Council meets at least once every quarter. It has been entrusted with decision making, monitoring, supervision and control responsibilities over Federal Legislative List Part II which includes: railways, minerals, oil and natural gas, hazardous materials, industrial policy, electricity, major ports, federal regulatory authorities, national planning and economic coordination, supervision and management of public debt, census, provincial police powers beyond provincial boundaries, regulation of legal, medical and other professions, standards in education and research, interprovincial coordination and conflict resolution.

National Economic Council (NEC) is also a constitutional federal body with oversight responsibility on national and provincial economic policies. The 18th Amendment gave provinces the upper hand instead of the federal government to vouch for their issues in the NEC. The provinces now appoint two members each, including the chief minister from each province and four federal members are appointed by the prime minister. The Council now must meet at least once every six months. Contentious issues can be brought in the NEC to resolve between the provinces.

There have been many positive impacts of the 18th Amendment. Power has been transferred to the provinces and they have become autonomous in the true sense. They are now mini-state units which can raise their own revenues, resolve matters of service delivery, engage in multilateral agreements and have greater control over their resources. The politics of provincialism and interference by the federal government has been deprived of any space to thrive. It has put brakes on the blame game that ensued between provinces and centre. It also favours the federal government in the sense that it cannot be made scapegoat for the failures of the provincial government.

Since major welfare related functional subjects and corresponding functions have been transferred to the provinces, health, education and other welfare activities fall entirely in the domain of the provinces. Federal government only holds an advisory role on the issues of health, education and welfare activities. By taking positive steps provinces can play their role in making themselves sustainable units which can cater to service delivery and bring the government closer to the people.

Coordination among provincial institutes on matters delegated to it by the federation has become easier in the wake of the 18th Amendment. Earlier, several federal departments used to perform the job of legislation on behalf of the provinces without any consultation and ignoring the conditions prevailing among provincial departments on ground. This anomaly has now been taken care of and provinces find it much easier to coordinate on policy issues. Inter-provincial coordination and claim against resources are now addressed in the



NEC. Each province is adequately represented and it gets a fair opportunity to resolve its issue after consultation. In this way issues are resolved in an ambient atmosphere through consultation and negotiations.

Provinces have now been allowed to seek technical and financial assistance from local and foreign financial institutions. It has been a significant step in the financial autonomy of the provinces as they gear toward their own revenue generation with federal transfers as per NFC award. As welfare services have now been delegated to these provinces, development and welfare can only be prioritized if they are not conditional to federal government approval.

Revenue generation on account of services has been allocated to the provincial government which has been hailed as landmark decision. Provinces are now allowed to impose a general sales tax on all services which are rendered within their jurisdictions. It is a welcome step as it would provide provinces with more revenues to support welfare activities. It would also reduce their reliance on federal grants and empower their tax bureaucracies.

The transfer of portfolios and functions by the federal government to the provinces via the 18th Amendment has been made in haste. Indubitably the transfer of functions and powers has strengthened the move towards improving governance by encouraging federalism tolerant of provincial autonomy in the country. But on ground the move occurred without taking into consideration critical pre-requisites. It is a fact that the federal government played the role of a big brother to all provinces and discharged many functions on their behalf. The operations of federal government were considered more professional, impartial and deft on various counts of policymaking, and making institutions functional. Foremost challenges included somewhat hasty transition to a decentralised federal structure with the near-complete absence of provincial and lower-tier government capacities to take on the newly-assigned responsibilities. The services of federal staff were not acquired by the provinces to kick start crucially important functions. Lack of trained staff, resources and supporting infrastructure at the provincial level and local government level to carry out the newly-assigned functions resulted in a paralysis in the delivery of many services and administrative functions by the devolved tiers of government.

The abolishment of several federal ministries and departments by the 18th Amendment led to surplus unabsorbed staff. A request was made to the provincial governments to absorb this staff in the departments devolved to them which was refused by them. This created unruly administrative situation as it became difficult to retain and relocate this work-force in disparate work assignments. The mismanagement of work-force and wastage of their services led to loss of precious revenue and professionalism.

Several policy coordination and implementation issues cropped up after the passage of 18th Amendment. Earlier it was seemingly difficult to coordinate horizontally between several federal ministries and attached departments. After the passage of 18th Amendment, it has become exceedingly difficult to achieve policy coordination between the centre and the agencies and departments of four federating units plus AJK and GB. In some instances, ratification of amendment, implementation of international treaties and obligations, divisive politics, narrow priorities and lack of trust lead to considerable challenges and difficulties to achieve amicable coordination. It could be felt that federal government was left with no option but to dictate legislative exigencies to the provinces.

Some critics have pontificated that nation building has been put on the back burner in the wake of the enactment of the 18th Amendment to the constitution. Issues have been highlighted which point out that centre had created inequality among the provinces and neglected the development of smaller provinces. Centre exploited the resources of smaller provinces and built larger provinces at their expense. In these circumstances, passage of 18th Amendment has been hailed as a right step to usher provincial autonomy which would give provinces the authority over their own resources and allow them to spend their wealth on the welfare of their inhabitants. A key point missing in the issues of provincial neglect and an overbearing centre is that it takes these seemingly resolvable issues into narrow grooves of provincialism. It neglects nation building and cohesion required to help all provinces to act together to defeat the scourge of poverty, terrorism and economic fallout. It needs to be acknowledged that provincialism at the expense of nation building is not going to help matters and strengthen the federation.

Policy confusion runs amok among the corridors of federal and provincial governments on the issues of welfare activities, defeating terrorism and ensuring peacekeeping. The state is responsible for the provision of security for life, liberty, freedom of thought and protection of property. These functions have been transferred to provinces and the scope of federal government has become very narrow. Federal government has acted as a major coordinator between foreign institutions and provincial governments to facilitate in the execution of various issues. It has got more experience as compared to the provinces. Now after the 18th Amendment confusion prevails on the issue of achieving various objectives. Planning Commission, Higher Education Commission (HEC) and ministry of Health have been abolished and no policy making can be done in the federal government. It remains to be seen how the provinces would fill this void and achieve the new objectives assigned to them. Moreover, the NEC and CCI have not been used optimally to advance the objectives of the federation and serve a functional coordination institutes. The meeting schedules of NEC and CCI should be on need and priority basis.

A major source of friction between the federal government and provincial governments has been the transfer of federal grants to the provinces under the NFC award. There are two issues at hand here. Taxation on services has been transferred to the provinces. Provinces have developed their own tax bureaucracies to run their tax affairs. However, this revenue chunk is not enough to cater to the revenue needs of the provinces. Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) by using taxes levied on imports, manufacturing, customs duty and excise duties generates revenue for the provinces as well as federal government. When it misses the revenue target assigned to it, the deficit is filled by contracting loans from private banks and profitable federal institutions. Several instances have surfaced when the federal government hinted at rolling back some of the provisions and function relating to transfer of grants to the provinces and contracting loans on their behalf. The assertion of federal government being that it has to borrow two trillion every year in order to bridge the budget deficit gap. However, the argument presented by federal government to roll back some of the features of 18th Amendment on this pretext is just a red herring. It wants to divert attention from its own failure to achieve budgetary target assigned to it. It has miserably failed to revamp its tax bureaucracy and bridge the gaping holes in its tax collection. The need of the hour is to enable federal tax bureaucracy to achieve budgetary targets and rationalize debt servicing, reform loss making public sector enterprises and reduce circular debt. On the other hand, it is also needed that provinces empower their tax bureaucracies and improve their tax collection. In a gradual phase out manner provinces ought to increase their tax revenue collection so that federal government could reduce its debt servicing. A joint taxation policy mechanism and coordination forum ought to be established which can help achieve more revenue for the federation and provinces.

Pakistan during its more than seventy years of existence has suffered from provincial disparities and flawed policies. It suffered from dysfunctional governance issue and moved from one crisis to another. One important reason for dysfunctional governance in Pakistan is due to lack of adherence to constitutional principles and disrespect for the rule of law. The 18th Amendment is significant and well intentioned to bring a greater clarity to the roles of federal and provincial governments. It ensures greater provincial autonomy to possibly reduce poor governance and increase responsiveness toward welfare delivery. The custodian of fundamental rights, right to education, health and employment now falls squarely in the domain of provincial governments. In order to achieve the objectives of this Amendment, governance needs to be improved. Several issues such as strengthening of tax bureaucracy, capacity building of provincial institutions and policy coordination among the provinces and federal government needs to be achieved. To complete this process further, fundamental reforms are needed to ensure that the public sector serves public interest and secures a common political and economic union. This Amendment must however be seen as only the first and an incomplete step toward reforming public governance in Pakistan. The chances of rolling back any features would be detrimental for the trust between the federation and the provinces. It would further embitter the relations and create more room for bickering and accusations. The right step would be to allow coordination and interaction channels to hold regular meetings and resolve all issues through a process of reconciliation.



# **MEDIA FREEDOM CAN ONLY IMPROVE PROSPECTS OF A WEAK DEMOCRACY**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) What is role and responsibilities of media?
  - (i) Role of media
  - (ii) Responsibility of media
- (c) Media influence
- (d) What does freedom of media mean?
- (e) Objective media and new modes of information communication
- (f) Pakistan on international media freedom index
- (g) What could be the restrictions on the freedom of media?
- (h) Media freedom under threat
- (i) A case against media freedom
- (j) Media to act as strengthener of democracy
- (k) Conclusion

## **ESSAY**

Media journalism is a powerhouse serving the role of a watchdog to report on the performance of state institutions, societal drift and issues revolving around public life. It is designated as fourth pillar of the state and acts to maintain equilibrium between the other three pillars. Its multifarious role and responsibilities enable it to have access to corridors of power. It frequently reports on the working of highest echelons of government. Its role becomes increasingly important when it challenges the ability of state institutions to govern. Its freedom is chided and trampled as it locks horns with grappling issues. It faces threats to its impartiality, objectivity and circulation. The onset of misinformation, multiple streams of information dissemination and lightning fast spread of news has often led to calls of restricting media. It has often been bandied about as acting against the interests of the state. Its role cannot be neglected in reporting fairly on matters of public interest prevailing at all tiers of government. It can help reform public policies and spurn government authorities into action. It can foster culture of understanding, reconciliation and cooperation. It can encourage dissent, considerate opinion and tolerance. Its role to act as a cementing force in strengthening democracy cannot be ignored.

Technological advancement has led to ubiquitous spread of information media and journalism. There are various streams of media used by journalism to spread their message to people. These streams of media exist in physical domains such as print outs and online through Internet streaming. They include newspapers, personal blogs, YouTube channels, Facebook pages, Twitter handles and Instagram live streams, etc. These carriers of information media are used to disseminate information. The job of media is to keep people informed about their surroundings. It helps to impart awareness, knowledge and responsibility. Whether it is a local newspaper or a national daily, its job is to keep people hooked to what, where, why and how it is happening at a particular place. It helps people remain hooked to their neighbourhoods, interact responsibly under the banner of law, and question the policies being followed by their local metropolitan corporation, district or tehsil office, utility company or their national government. It helps broaden the vision of people by sharing coverage on different innovations, political developments, natural events, and personal and corporate responsibilities. It diversifies experience through

interactive exchanges, and enhances communication between people belonging to different backgrounds by fostering understanding. Its scope is expansive and its appeal is universal.

Media acts as a watchdog to report on any issue of wrongdoing, transgression, violation or failure to implement regulations. Its role is to raise awareness about the rights of people. It acts as a bulwark against violation of fundamental rights. It uses its voice and gives voice to other people to encourage dissent, debate and deliberation in the society. Its job is to embrace the multiplicity of divergent opinions to create more room for investigation. It criticizes policies, laws, regulations to effect change in the working of the governments. It creates more room for toleration of criticism by voicing concerns for public interest by cajoling government to take necessary action. It reports on the actions of private entities to raise awareness about their operations. It seizes every opportunity to pounce on any issue that could affect public and environment at large.

Freedom of media comes with the hefty price of immense responsibility to report objectively. In the process of reporting media has to be cognizant about upholding fundamental rights. It is responsible for fact checking on the accuracy of the reported news and the information to be passed on to readers. Its responsibility is to weed out fake news and any misinformation. Its responsibility is to eliminate yellow journalism, propaganda, and encourage self-censorship. The issue of black sheep in media is a serious as information is often used by them to cover facts or protect wrongdoing. In many instances, opportunists play for little gains to misreport or pass on irrelevant news to divert attention of people. It is responsibility of media watch over matters pertaining to libel, slander and character assassination of political personalities. It is prime responsibility of media not to allow objective and impartial media houses to become media proxies for state governments. Buying of media loyalty to play second fiddle through use of different levers of power by mafias, corporate businesses or state governments should be strictly discouraged. It is responsibility of media to send clear message that no amount of patronage or threats can imperil media freedom.

Opinion makers in media exercise massive influence on the way people, organizations, institutes and governments make decisions. They have various sources of information that could mould opinion. Their opinion matters as they are considered to be expert, knowledgeable and cognizant of the situation. They can give suggestions, do analysis and provide guidelines in different events. Often different think-tanks act as opinion makers to give their insights on issues of national and international interest. Opinion makers can be from different walks of life. They could be accomplished scientists, celebrities, politicians, sportsmen or experienced journalists. All forms of media make extensive use of opinion makers to expand their influence. Heavy responsibility is borne by these opinion makers.

Pakistani media plays a vital role in issues of national and international interest. It raises awareness on number of issues pertaining to governance, the performance of national economy and success of government's foreign policy. It critiques all domains of public policy and the performance of state institutions. It publishes reports on health, literacy, education, accountability, elections, and rule of law to criticize the performance of the government. It uses its presence and influence to act as watchdog. It highlights acts of omission and commission by public office holders, unearths instances of profiteering, hoarding, corruption and embezzlement. It reports on the performance of state institutions to check whether they are delivering public service. Its influence runs across all tiers of society, polity and state formations.

Freedom of media extends beyond the right to express and pass on information. It means more than just expression of opinions and exchange of authentic news and information. It entails reporting objectively by maintaining the secrecy of their sources. It is about the freedom to investigate, unearth and debunk. It is to express without any hindrance, gags, or censorships. It is about exchange of opinion without any restrictions. It is about respecting the customs, beliefs and norms of other people. It is operating in political, financial and social domains to augment the services of the state. It works in places and scenarios where there are loopholes, poor laws, glaring violations and blanket exemptions. It is directed at checking for transparency in the working of state institutions. It is the challenge to take head on authoritarianism of the state and to poke at all matters that could be of public and private interest.

In the wake of new technological tools available for communication, media objectivity has been undermined due to shrinking of media streams. Despite the fact that there are now many ways to air news and get news, journalism has actually shrunk to a few social platforms like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. It stands to reason that the freedom to post anything on social media has offered stiff competition to various streams of journalism who report objectively. More and more people rely on a few social media platforms to read news. The choice of readers gets restricted whereas the choice of influencer to post any fake or unauthenticated news increases. This state of affairs has served a critical blow to objective media. Often it is hard to segregate propaganda from authentic news.



Pakistan fares poorly on media freedom index measured by different international institutes. It is at 145th position out of 180 countries which makes it a poor performer in terms of ensuring objectivity, right to information and safety of journalists. In recent years the country has received negative reviews by various international and national institutions on clamping down on media and thwarting freedom of expression and information. Journalists have been mauled, threatened and trolled. In many ways media freedom was attacked by lifting channel from airing transmissions, blocking of licences and inflicting of fines.

Restrictions on media come in multifarious forms which undermine the right of people to have access to information. Often media restrictions start with censorship of material on the behest of state regulators whose performance comes under criticism. In case where channels have rejected censorships they have been threatened by transmission blockages and curtailment of vital advertisements. Various flagship shows have been restricted to invite opinion makers who criticize government policies. Media coverage is not given to politicians and persons who are criticizing the government. Bullying, trolling and threats have been hurled at journalists who have flouted dictates by channels or state regulators to comment on their policies. Personal attacks and vilification campaigns have also been run on different social media to silence dissenting voices. Spamming and spying on journalists has often been used to frustrate their efforts and prevent them from objective reporting.

Media restrictions are often employed in veiled forms to stop the dissemination of information. The worst forms of restrictions involve the presence of various actors who chip in to make loud noises so that real message never gets heard. These restrictions come in the mode of using counter opinions to discredit a rationally sound opinion. In order to prevent dissemination of information, it is branded as threat to national interest. Policing of opinions is carried out on the basis of national interest, religion, moral and sacrilege. Debate is often closed on these topics on the pretext of being a threat to society. In a way the state tries to create acceptability of only those opinions that tow government line. Any opinions that don't follow state narrative are punished or consigned to oblivion.

In recent years freedom of media has come under acute threat due to restrictions placed on reporting, sharing of opinion on social media and commenting on government policies. Apart from passing laws that place restrictions on the material that would be shared, rhetoric and narrative against dissenting voice has been used to reduce their influence. Efforts have been made to create moral space for the working of the government and its policies. Any criticism against the policies of government is treated as falling on the side which wants to dethrone the government. Legitimacy of government is substantiated by the narrative and camp followership. Issues are made contentious and closed to debate. Religion and morality issues are raised to divert attention from pressing issues of public interest.

Clampdown on media freedom rests on the assumption that media is corrupt, opportunist, blackmailer and could cause social disruption. It is alleged that if media is left unregulated and unbridled, it would create discord in the society and lead to anarchy. It is also alleged that news are often selectively used and targeted to threaten the smooth functioning of government. Some journalists are alleged to use their opinion making influence to win favours.

Media freedom is a must for strengthening of democracy and state institutions in the country. The freedom to report on the performance of state institutions and policies allows politicians and executives to make course corrections. Media has played its role in exposing corruption, financial mismanagement and violations of regulations. It has highlighted the performance of public institutes and their role in service delivery to public. It can suggest reform and policy revisions for reviving inefficient institutes. Its role as a watchdog can help in increasing accountability in all tiers of government. It provides public the opportunity to weigh in the performance of a government. It helps in creating public opinion about the performance of government and issues pertaining to their life, liberty and property. It provides people reason to vote for a political party. It acts as platform where public can make its voice heard in all matters of governance.

Media freedom in Pakistan is pivotal for the development of strong institutions and health of democracy in the country. It allows for debate, dissent and sharing of information. It helps in evaluating the performance of state institutions in all spheres. It checks for the quality of education; the need for private sector investment; the cooperation required among political parties; it gives voice to the underprivileged and poverty stricken; it exposes corruption in official corridors; it discusses ethical practices to reduce pollution, etc. Any restrictions placed on freedom of media would only hurt the prospects of progress in the country. Democratic institutions are always open to critique and criticism. A free media would produce positive criticism that would attract attention of authorities. It is high time to grant more freedom to media and open avenues for information exchange.

# **PRACTICE ESSAYS**

**(1)**

## **FIRST AND FOREMOST DUTY OF GOVERNMENT**

### **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Improve trust relationship between the State and individual
- (c) Guarantee fundamental human rights to all citizens
- (d) Uphold the sanctity of constitution and rule of law
- (e) Duty of a government to establish a democratic political system
- (f) Ensure representation of all people irrespective of any differences
- (g) Equal treatment of minorities and threatened communities
- (h) Apprise people about their responsibilities and their rights
- (i) Frame laws and regulations to keep a check on state power
- (j) Establish independent institutions which are democratic and representative
- (k) Entrench a culture of accountability and efficiency
- (l) Improve governance issues to achieve objectives of the State
- (m) Provide health, education, property rights and security to population
- (n) Eradicate poverty, remove unemployment and discrimination
- (o) Introduce devolution of government across different tiers of government
- (p) Reduce power centres to improve service delivery
- (q) Improve security situation to address law and order situation
- (r) Conclusion



**(2)**

## **CHANGING GLOBAL POWER DYNAMICS**

### **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) US hegemony as a global superpower and use of economic and military power to advance its national interests
- (c) Rise of China as an economic and military power in the World
- (d) US government's economic war with China
- (e) Challenge of Russia and EU against US policies
- (f) Decline in the role of UN
- (g) Changing power dynamics in South Asia and East Asia
  - (i) US support of India to act as a balancer against Chinese influence in the South Asian region
  - (ii) US support of India to safeguard its strategic interests in South Asia
  - (iii) US and China's competing struggle for influence in South China sea
- (h) Indo-Pak power tussle
  - (i) Indian design to impose its hegemony in South Asia by keeping check on all nations
  - (ii) Indian support of Afghan government and allegations of terrorism against Pakistan
  - (iii) Balance of power struggle between India and Pakistan
  - (iv) Pakistan's efforts to raise awareness about Indian atrocities against Kashmiris
  - (v) Pakistan's efforts to convene UNSC meeting when special constitutional status of Kashmir was revoked
  - (vi) Pakistan's efforts to raise concern against the human rights' violations against the people of Kashmir
  - (vii) Resolution of Kashmir dispute in the light of UN resolutions
- (i) Afghan peace process and US withdrawal from the region
  - (i) Commissioning of peace deal between Taliban and Afghan government
  - (ii) Peace deal and ceasefire agreement between warring factions
  - (iii) US withdrawal from the region and peace agreement
  - (iv) Pakistan's role to execute peace agreement and not allow any terrorist activities on its soil
  - (v) Pakistan's resolve to eradicate terrorism on its soil
- (j) CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) project and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project
  - (i) China's BRI project to integrate Asia with Europe through land routes
  - (ii) Participation of several countries in BRI
  - (iii) US reservations against the CPEC and BRI project

- (iv) India's rejection of Chinese offer to participate in BRI
- (v) Rise of China and relations with Pakistan
- (vi) CPEC project a part of China's BRI
  - Development of transport and communication infrastructure
  - Energy development projects for more production
  - Setup of Special Economic zones across different regions of the country
  - Setup of training centres and universities for socio-economic uplift
  - New railroad projects across provinces
  - Development of Gwadar as a functional deep seaport
- (k) Changing dynamics in Middle East
  - (i) Dragging Syrian conflict involving multiple stakeholders US, Russia, Turkey, Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia
  - (ii) Humanitarian crisis as a result of a decade-old war in Syria
  - (iii) Saudi-Yemen war and internal power conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran
  - (iv) War of words and struggle for influence in the Persian Gulf region
  - (v) Iranian support of Houthi rebels in Yemen
  - (vi) Poverty, malnutrition and mass killings
- (l) Changing world dynamic and Pakistan foreign policy options
  - (i) Need of the hour to improve relations with US
  - (ii) Strengthening ties with China
  - (iii) Building strategic ties with Russia
  - (iv) Engaging Central Asia with especial focus on CASA-1000 and TAPI projects in the wake of CPEC development
  - (v) Rise of AU and development of bilateral ties with African countries
  - (vi) Pakistan's trade relations with ASEAN states and economic collaboration
- (m) Multi-polarity in changing power dynamic of the world
  - (i) Russian resurgence and its economic gains
  - (ii) China economic might and US trade war
  - (iii) US isolationism and diminishing role in international affairs
  - (iv) Assertion of EU as a bloc and its role in negotiating deals on its own
- (n) Way forward for a vibrant foreign policy of Pakistan with changing dynamics
  - (i) Safeguard of national and strategic interests
  - (ii) Political stability to ensure continuity of domestic and foreign policies
  - (iii) Economic development to empower people
  - (iv) Making new alliances and rational decision making
  - (v) Eradication of terrorism in all forms
  - (vi) Participation in peace processes through the platform of UN
- (o) Conclusion



(3)

## PLURALISTIC VISION OF ISLAM

### OUTLINES

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Islam espouses plural values
  - (i) It is a religion of peace, harmony and cooperation
  - (ii) It encourages people to grant rights, protect property and save lives
  - (iii) It preaches building tolerance, understanding and harmony
  - (iv) It advises respect for the religious beliefs of believers of different religions
  - (v) It encourages believers of different religions to cooperate on common issues
  - (vi) It is a universal religion concerned about betterment and progress of mankind
  - (vii) It lays profound stress on social justice, egalitarian society, equality of rights
  - (viii) It entertains critical thought, inquiry, research and liberal discourse
  - (ix) It champions rights of women and gives them protection, respect and prestige
  - (x) Islamic teachings are not in conflict with modern political thought
  - (xi) Islam is in favour of democratic and individual property rights
  - (xii) Islam is in favour of a welfare state which ensures distribution of income
  - (xiii) Islam encourages empathy, kindness and forgiving
- (c) Conclusion

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## (4)

# DEVOLUTION OF POWER IN PAKISTAN

## OUTLINES

- (a) Introduction
- (b) After 18th Amendment to the constitution concurrent list abolished
- (c) Federation responsible for defence, taxation and foreign policy
- (d) Provincial autonomy established and several new ministries have been established
- (e) Why devolution required in the country?
  - (i) Centralization and concentration of power in provincial capitals and district governments
  - (ii) Devolution of power necessary at district level to create a politically responsible tier
  - (iii) Devolution of power and creation of local governments need of the hour to give representation to people living in districts
  - (iv) Office of DCO is not representative of people
  - (v) Devolution would transfer power and responsibilities to representatives of people who could then legislate and execute on behalf of people
  - (vi) Functions can be transferred to local government and they should be given funds
  - (vii) Efficiency to improve as a segregation of functions would be helpful in achieving targeted goals
  - (viii) Division of functions among town, council and taluka nazims to distribute work load
- (f) Why project of devolution is getting delayed?
  - (i) Political parties don't want to dilute their power by making local governments in charge of district governments
  - (ii) Political parties want to control provincial and district governments through their handpicked bureaucrats
  - (iii) Role of members of provincial assemblies would further diminish if devolution system is enacted
- (g) Way forward
  - (i) Elections for local governments in provinces to be conducted
  - (ii) Establishing a functional local government tier with devolved powers
  - (iii) Reduction in concentration of power in the hands of bureaucrats
- (h) Conclusion



## (5)

# EDUCATION PROBLEMS OF PAKISTAN

## OUTLINE

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Education sector divided into Formal, Informal and Technical education system
  - (i) Formal education system is the traditional education system routed toward professional education
  - (ii) Informal education system is based on religion-based Madrasa and seminary education system
  - (iii) Technical education system is based on skill-based education system that trains students professionally for skilled jobs
- (c) Problems of education sector
  - (i) Multiple streams of education
  - (ii) Poor building, classroom facilities, sanitation and difficult access to schools located in far-flung areas
  - (iii) Disparity in education system for female gender and restrictive access due to lack of facilities and availability of female teachers
  - (iv) Issue of student dropout, and inadequate focus on female education
  - (v) Lack of infrastructure and equipment facilities, lack of office, laboratory and sports facilities
  - (vi) Lack of teacher training, refresher courses and performance appraisal to check promotion and suitability for service
  - (vii) Skewed distribution of staff, teachers; issue of teacher absenteeism
  - (viii) Recruitments of teachers and supporting staff made without diligently following a comprehensive programme
  - (ix) Outdated curriculum, substandard quality of books and abysmal teaching methodology
  - (x) Education model based on rote learning instead of scientific inquiry
  - (xi) Technical education lagging update and importance
  - (xii) Different streams of curriculum, lack of focus on language development
  - (xiii) Commercialization of education and mushrooming of private education
  - (xiv) No focus on urban public education
  - (xv) Poor supervision of education and exam standards
  - (xvi) Regional disparity in education among districts and provinces
  - (xvii) Poor focus on higher education and lack of communication with industry
  - (xviii) Lack of research and investigative studying methodology
  - (xix) System not equipped to absorb graduates who have acquired higher education
- (d) Recommendations
  - (i) To harmonize multiple streams of education by teaching similar subjects to mainstream and

madrassa education system

- (ii) Improve building, classroom facilities, sanitation and provide access to schools located in far-flung areas by developing splintered campuses and assessing student ratio
  - (iii) Remove disparity in education system for female gender and restrictive access due to lack of facilities and availability of female teachers
  - (iv) Resolve issue of student dropout, and inadequate focus on female education
  - (v) Find a practical and detailed solution for lack of infrastructure and equipment facilities, lack of office, laboratory and sports facilities
  - (vi) Improve teacher training, refresher courses and performance appraisal to check promotion and suitability for service
  - (vii) Address skewed distribution of staff, teachers; issue of teacher absenteeism by using automation, vigilance and record keeping
  - (viii) Streamline recruitments of teachers and supporting staff made by following a comprehensive programme
  - (ix) Replace outdated curriculum, substandard quality of books and abysmal teaching methodology
  - (x) Revamp and replace education model based on rote learning instead of scientific inquiry
  - (xi) Reinvigorate technical education, update it and increase capacity of teachers
  - (xii) Integrate different streams of curriculum, and increase focus on language development
  - (xiii) Address the issue of commercialization of education and mushrooming of private education
  - (xiv) Focus on expansion of urban public education system in urban areas
  - (xv) Enhance supervision of education and exam standards
  - (xvi) Reduce regional disparity in education among districts and provinces
  - (xvii) Prioritise focus on higher education and lack of communication with industry
  - (xviii) Introduce and spread research and investigative studying methodology
  - (xix) Equipped to absorb graduates who have acquired higher education
- (e) Conclusion



(6)

## ENERGY CRISIS IN PAKISTAN

### OUTLINE

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Why energy important
  - (i) Makes precious addition to GDP of a country
  - (ii) For development of industry as an important input for production
  - (iii) Cheaper energy to make cheaper products and reduce cost of doing business
  - (iv) Increase in exports, retail and trade can be achieved with availability of energy
  - (v) Clean energy sources to reduce pollution and achieve greater efficiency
- (c) Share of different energy production sources
  - (i) Non-renewable energy sources
    - Energy generated through dams (hydroelectric energy)
    - Energy generated through generators (HSD, natural gas, RLNG, coal, thermal oil)
  - (ii) Renewable energy resources
    - Wind energy
    - Solar energy
    - Hydro-energy
- (d) Energy production sectors and their contribution
  - (i) Hydroelectric energy production through dams
  - (ii) Electric energy production through use of coal-powered plants
  - (iii) Electric energy production through generators run on high speed diesel (HSD) and thermal oil
  - (iv) Electric energy production by steam turbines, electric generators through use of natural gas and Regasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG)
  - (v) Electric energy production through wind turbines using wind driven generators
  - (vi) Electric energy production through solar cell powered storage banks
  - (vii) Energy production through the use of biofuels as byproducts obtained from different crops
- (e) Causes of energy crises
  - (i) Inability and lack of will to harness potential of water availability and its conversion into an energy resource
  - (ii) Lack of diversification of energy generation sources
  - (iii) Stagnant hydroelectric generation: Inability to build more dams and increase share of hydroelectric power over the years
  - (iv) Shoddy deals with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to generate costly thermal energy

- (v) Fixed capacity price payments to plants established under the IPP agreements
- (vi) Poor institutional check on IPPs, Generation and Distribution companies
- (vii) High cost of energy due to fluctuation in price of fuel in international markets
- (viii) Inefficient and loss making transmission system resulting in wastage of energy
- (ix) Poor cultivation and harvesting practices, low yield and inadequate use of biofuels
- (x) Issue of circular debt and pending payments of generation companies
- (xi) Rework the energy tariff and remove any ambiguities in it

#### Solution to address energy crisis

- (i) Build more dams and run-of-the river small dam projects
- (ii) Increase the footprint and generation of energy through hydro-electric power
- (iii) Encourage and incentivise renewable energy producers by giving speedy clearance, tax credits and better credit facilities
- (iv) Plan for foreign direct investment in renewable energy resources and announce a comprehensive policy
- (v) Renegotiate agreements done with IPPs to reduce capacity payments
- (vi) Restructuring of NEPRA to disallow power companies any increase in tariff which fail to recover power cost from large consumers
- (vii) Reduce dependence on foreign fuels to produce energy. Instead use locally available fossil fuels (coal, oil)
- (viii) Encourage industries to produce their own power and grant them incentive for giving power to WAPDA
- (ix) Initiate an energy and pollution audit mechanism to reward or punish producers and distributors who have low efficiency, greater pollution, and high transmission and distribution losses
- (x) Invest in power innovation and research to make energy generation process efficient, pollution free
- (xi) Revamp power management mechanisms for effective check and balance

#### (g) Conclusion



**(7)**

# **CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE BIGGEST THREAT TO PAKISTAN**

## **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction**
- (b) Factors contributing to climate change**
  - (i) Burning of fossil fuels for energy generation**
  - (ii) Emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs)**
  - (iii) Pollution emission**
  - (iv) Depletion of ozone layer due to CFCs**
  - (v) Reduction in forest cover**
  - (vi) Rapid industrialization**
  - (vii) Rapid urbanization**
  - (viii) Excessive use of non-renewable fossil fuels**
  - (ix) Excessive production of non-biodegradable waste**
  - (x) Population explosion**
- (c) Indicators of climate change**
  - (i) Change in weather pattern floods, droughts, heatwaves, severe storms, heavy or unexpected rainfall patterns, etc.**
  - (ii) Glacial retreat (melting), low yield of crops, water shortages**
  - (iii) Rising sealevels, rising sea temperature, rise in temperature of atmosphere and decline in other places**
- (d) Effects of climate change**
  - (i) Unplanned migrations as a result of natural displacements**
  - (ii) Loss of agriculture arable land and livelihoods in rural areas**
  - (iii) Increase in acidity of soil**
  - (iv) Spread of water and air-borne diseases through mosquito bite, viruses and bacteria**
  - (v) Rising sealevel and subsequent sea intrusion is claiming thousands of acres of coastal land**
  - (vi) Loss of mangrove forest cover near coastal areas of Sindh province**
  - (vii) Increase in glaciers melting**
  - (viii) Reduction in river flow**
  - (ix) Issue of food security due to reduced yield and loss of crops**
  - (x) Danger to environment as millions of species at the brink of extinction and loss of biodiversity**
  - (xi) Air pollution leading to smog and health issues**

- (xii) Depletion of forest cover
  - (xiii) Climate change poses a serious threat to nation's economy
- (e) How to combat climate change in Pakistan
- (i) Investment in clean energy generation required by switching to renewable sources of energy generation, i.e. wind, hydro, solar energy
  - (ii) Reduction in pollution emission and strict pollutant and effluent emission check to be introduced to regulate industrial emissions
  - (iii) Devise a transport policy that reduces number of vehicles on the road and penalizes cars, trucks and other carriages which contribute to environmental pollution through emission of smoke
  - (iv) Policy to be framed to achieve reduction in GHGs
  - (v) Mass plantation drive across the country to increase forest cover should be launched
  - (vi) Proper waste collection, disposal and cremation strategies should be implemented
  - (vii) Benchmarks to be set on year-on-year basis to gradually decrease carbon emissions, control pollution, reduce GHGs emissions, diversify energy generation sources
  - (viii) Efforts to ensure smooth implementation of Paris agreement and other climate-related resolutions
  - (ix) Efficiently plan cities and areas around rural areas so that urban migration could be reduced and people find basic health facilities at their doorstep
  - (x) Protect and save water for consumption and storage
  - (xi) Design energy efficient and saving building
  - (xii) Conserve energy through different insulation techniques
- (f) Conclusion

(8)

# THE RECENT STAND-OFF BETWEEN CHINA AND US AND ITS IMPACTS ON PAKISTAN

## OUTLINE

- (a) Introduction
- (b) US trade war with China due to following reasons:
  - (i) Huge trade deficit between US and China
  - (ii) US alleging China's use of unfair trade practices and intellectual property theft
  - (iii) US alleging that China has artificially kept its currency rate low
  - (iv) China accusing US of blocking its rise as a global power
  - (v) Government of China initiated its strategic economic plan titled 'Made in China 2025,' in May 2015, designed to reduce the country's dependence on imported technology
  - (vi) US tariffs imposed on sectors that Beijing aims to develop as part of its 'Made in China 2025' while retaliatory tariffs targeted US agriculture products that make up a large share of American exports to China
- (c) Impact of US trade war with China
  - (i) US opposing Chinese trade stakes in Pakistan and making negative propaganda against CPEC project
  - (ii) US envies China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and fears China would overtake its economic and military power
  - (iii) US has opposed CPEC project categorically stating that it would increase Pakistan's debt burden
  - (iv) China denounced US campaign to spread misinformation against CPEC projects
  - (v) Sanctions and increase in tariff on Chinese goods would increase their cost and make it difficult for Pakistan to make costlier purchases
  - (vi) US efforts to make India a counterweight against China in the South Asian region and its permission to build Chahbahar port would affect CPEC project of Pakistan
  - (vii) Slow pace of CPEC as Chinese engagement in trade war with US would slow down the development progress in Pakistan
  - (viii) Loss to Pakistan's economy as investors would be driven if US casts doubt on CPEC projects
  - (ix) Decrease in FDI as supportive projects are halted due to slow pace of CPEC completion
  - (x) US may also influence credit rating of Pakistan to prevent it from engaging with China
- (d) Conclusion



**(9)**

## **GENUINE RURAL UPLIFT CAN ONLY MAKE OUR COUNTRY STRONG AND SELF-RELIANT**

### **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Issues in development of rural sector of the country
  - (i) Rural population forms 64 percent population of the country
  - (ii) Issue of health, illiteracy, employment and opportunity in rural areas
  - (iii) Rural population is unskilled, cut-off from major economic activities
  - (iv) Rural areas lack industrial and road infrastructure, diversified economic activities
  - (v) Pakistani rural areas are dependent on agriculture and farming
  - (vi) Industries related to mining and extraction in development stage
  - (vii) Industries not located near areas where natural resources occur
- (c) Suggestions to uplift rural areas
  - (i) Development of road infrastructure to give communication access to rural areas
  - (ii) Development of resource regions near rural areas to benefit rural areas
  - (iii) Improvement of literacy, health and employment to build capacity of population
  - (iv) Diversification of employment, skill and business opportunities to uplift the people of rural areas
  - (v) Improving supply chain and collection of raw material to improve business and transport chains
  - (vi) Development of information cells and separate news and radio channels to help people in making prudent choices
  - (vii) Empowering women through education, skill training and credit facilities
  - (viii) More government intervention to help rural population have access to more opportunities
  - (ix) Financial incentives to be offered to industries located near rural areas
  - (x) Creation of special economic zones fully equipped with water, electricity, Internet services for rural areas
- (d) Conclusion

**(10)**

## **NEW WAVES OF FEMINISM AND OUR CULTURE**

### **OUTLINE**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Why the need of feminism in Pakistani society
  - (i) Male-dominant society and power in the hands of men
  - (ii) Low literacy, unemployment, lack of opportunities
  - (iii) Disparity in status of women living in rural and urban areas
  - (iv) Abuse, violence, honour killings and discrimination against women
  - (v) Women deprived of their fundamental rights, property and inheritance
  - (vi) Subjugation and cultural restrictions against women
- (c) Contribution of women in society
  - (i) Contribution of women in household
  - (ii) Women in rural areas contributing in farming and manual labour
  - (iii) Large number of women engaged in informal domestic sectors of economy
  - (iv) Women participating in different walks of life
  - (v) Services and agriculture sector contains a large number of women
- (d) Why feminism has gained importance
  - (i) Role of media to spread awareness regarding pathetic conditions of females
  - (ii) Subjugation, exploitation and sexual harassment of women
  - (iii) Denial of fundamental rights to women of different stripes
  - (iv) Persecution of literate and illiterate women at workplace, domestic household and public sphere
  - (v) Lack of political awareness among women and low numbers of women in national and provincial assemblies
  - (vi) Focus of international and national community workers and development institutions to increase participation of women and address their core issues
  - (vii) Misinterpretation of religious laws to clamp down on freedom of women
  - (viii) Lack of equal participation of women in different fields so a need was felt to give them quotas to bring them at par with men
- (e) Role of government to achieve agenda of feminism
  - (i) Creation of women quota to ensure enhanced participation of women
  - (ii) Passage of laws which favour women empowerment through economic, social and political protection
  - (iii) Laws passed to outlaw domestic violence, sexual harassment, online bullying, and forceful forfeiture of inheritance and property

- (iv) Provision of better education, employment and development opportunities
- (v) Establishment of exclusive women universities and banks to encourage loans from banks and start their own business

Role of international and national NGOs

- (f)
  - (i) Aurat Foundation, Kashaf Foundation, Women's Action Forum, OXFAM, AUSAID, USAID and USEFP
  - (ii) #Me Too movement to expose sexual harassment
  - (iii) Advertisement on mainstream media to raise awareness on women issues, rights and abuse of women rights
  - (iv) International Women's Day to highlight instances of abuse against women
- (g) How to achieve objective of feminism in Pakistan
  - (i) Cultural change required to address issues of women rights
  - (ii) Removal of gender biases and stereotypes against women
  - (iii) Legislation to protect women rights against abuse, domestic violence, sexual harassment and discrimination
  - (iv) Curbing online cyber bullying, hate speech, intolerance, and life threats issued to women
  - (v) More participation of women in different walks of life
  - (vi) Quota allocation for women in jobs and age relaxation to women on the basis of backward area profile and income statement of parents
  - (vii) Better economic opportunities to women to make them financially independent
  - (viii) Special education package to be announced by government for female students in schools, colleges and universities to grant scholarships
  - (ix) Tax credits to employers employing women beyond a certain percentage
  - (x) Support for feminist ideals without dismissing it as western agenda
  - (xi) Increase role of female role models like Malala Yousafzai, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, etc. to raise awareness among women from privileged backgrounds
  - (xii) Imparting science and art education to encourage critical thought
  - (xiii) Civil society to play a robust role to increase awareness among women
- (h) Conclusion



(11)

## I MAY DISAPPROVE WHAT YOU SAY, BUT I WILL DEFEND TO THE DEATH YOUR RIGHT TO SAY IT

### OUTLINE

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Why freedom of Speech is important, because:
  - (i) It paves way toward social, intellectual and psychological evolution
  - (ii) It provides a window into different behaviours, thinking and ideas
  - (iii) It encourages dissemination and exchange of ideas
  - (iv) It is helpful in keeping check on excesses of rulers
  - (v) Initiates accountability of leaders
  - (vi) Provides critical criticism of government policies
  - (vii) Helps in raising voice against despotism
  - (viii) Ensures curbing the use of force to silence
  - (ix) It increases focus on pressing issues existing in the society
  - (x) It challenges the unexamined narrative, folklore and storytelling
  - (xi) It challenges the limits of tolerance developed for violence, abuse, misuse of power, enjoyment of unentitled privileges
  - (xii) It directs attention toward humanitarian crisis, poverty, social issues and poor governance
  - (xiii) It establishes respect for human rights, life and entitlement to a belief system
  - (xiv) It entertains the idea that difference of opinion is good for intellectual diversity and tolerance
  - (xv) It is the reflection of a nation that thinks and investigates before it speaks
  - (xvi) Promote environmental management to save the planet Earth
  - (xvii) It prevents the involvement of leadership in secret diplomacy
  - (xviii) It prevents the creation of national secrets whereby leaders hide their wrongdoings and crime
  - (xix) It empowers government by highlighting necessary work that needs to be done
- (c) Freedom of speech in Pakistan can be credited for:
  - (i) Development of social, religious and economic thought
  - (ii) Raising of awareness among masses about their issues
  - (iii) Supporting the continuation of democratic set-up
  - (iv) Supporting the independence of judiciary
  - (v) Role of media as a public watchdog against excesses committed by government
  - (vi) Consensus building against terrorist organizations
  - (vii) Highlighting promulgation of Draconian laws to gag and block media

- (viii) Highlighting grievances of marginalised and underprivileged classes
- (d) Cautious use freedom of speech right to avoid its misuse:
  - (i) Care should be taken to avoid hurting religious sentiments
  - (ii) Topics or issues which could spark intolerance to be approached with caution
  - (iii) Populist tendencies may be avoided so that camp followership is not invoked
  - (iv) Public opinion to be protected from hate speech, fake news and control by media manipulators
  - (v) Hate speech to be avoided which may incite violence
  - (vi) Media persons to refrain from influencing public opinion for propaganda setting
- (e) To prevent the misuse of free speech, following steps should be taken on priority basis:
  - (i) Encourage ethical journalism to report with authentic news
  - (ii) Verification of news sources before reporting on issues of national importance
  - (iii) Implementation of a code of conduct for journalists to report objectively
  - (iv) Engagement with social media search engines to stop misinformation
  - (v) Strengthening of Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority to work as a media watchdog
  - (vi) Collaboration with reputable media houses, international news agencies and government to counter fake news
  - (vii) Building awareness in people to effectively use their right of freedom of speech
  - (viii) Blocking attempts of government to clamp down on free speech
- (f) Conclusion

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## DEMOCRACY IS A CULTURE RATHER THAN A PROCESS

### OUTLINES

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Democracy is a culture because:
  - (i) Democracy based on ideals, norms and values
  - (ii) Democracy based on a relationship of trust
  - (iii) Democracy based on social, political and economic institutions
  - (iv) It establishes political institutions, entrenches respect for law
  - (v) It runs affairs of state through institutions
  - (vi) It gives power to raise revenues for the state
  - (vii) It gives power to state to tax revenue earned by businesses
  - (viii) It gives permission to spend on public projects and public welfare
  - (ix) It gives authority to spend on health, education, security of people
  - (x) It gives authority to law enforcement agencies to enforce law and order
  - (xi) It is based on literacy, awareness and participation
  - (xii) It is based on transfer of power to representatives of people and holding them accountable
  - (xiii) It caters to objective reporting of news and dissemination of information
- (c) In what manner democracy is not a process
  - (i) It is not a mechanical process
  - (ii) It cannot be enforced through elections
  - (iii) It won't function without institutions
  - (iv) It won't function without rule of law
  - (v) It won't function without representation
  - (vi) It won't function if state doesn't raise finances
  - (vii) It won't function if accountability is not present
  - (viii) It won't function without implementation
  - (ix) Democracy is a belief in a culture
- (d) How to achieve a democratic culture?
  - (i) By establishing supremacy of the constitution
  - (ii) By safeguarding an independent judiciary
  - (iii) Through free and fair election
  - (iv) Through a culture of tolerance and accommodation



- (v) By promoting education and literacy
- (vi) By following ideals of fairness and social justice
- (vii) By following ideals of equality and non-discrimination
- (viii) By ensuring a free and objective media to do reporting
- (ix) By promoting religious tolerance among masses
- (x) By initiating a culture of self and institutional accountability
- (xi) By avoiding tussle between civil and military relations
- (xii) By ridding of feudalism
- (xiii) By revamping tax revenue generation
- (xiv) By empowering state law and order machinery
- (e) Conclusion

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## THE EMERGING POWER OF PUBLIC OPINION

### OUTLINES

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Public Opinion a potent force and power because:
  - (i) It can influence government and its policies
  - (ii) It has widespread appeal and effect
  - (iii) It conveys its message directly to the corridors of power
  - (iv) It is not hindered by any red tapism or bureaucratic hiccups
  - (v) It can spread rapidly due to fast communication
  - (vi) It can become contagious on contentious issues
  - (vii) It can change rapidly under different circumstances
  - (viii) It caters to the aspirations of public
- (c) How Public Opinion has emerged?
  - (i) Increase in literacy rate and use of video streaming
  - (ii) Shift from traditional sources of information dissemination
  - (iii) Due to cheap and widespread access of Internet
  - (iv) Round the clock availability of information media
  - (v) Social networking websites displaying news feed
  - (vi) A user can get information without any subscription
  - (vii) Opinion makers can now attract any audience
  - (viii) Message can be conveyed in different manner
  - (ix) Rapid evolution of political and social thoughts
- (d) Importance of emerging Public Opinion
  - (i) Backbone of democratic government
  - (ii) It can influence policymaking
  - (iii) It can influence government inaction
  - (iv) It acts as check on performance of government
  - (v) It defines the aims and objectives of a nation
  - (vi) It helps in achieving governance
  - (vii) It critiques government stance of policies
  - (viii) It checks excesses committed by state
  - (ix) It ensures participation of citizens for their rights

- (x) It struggles for rule of law
- (xi) It strives for an egalitarian society
- (xii) It provides a platform to masses
- (e) Impact of powerful Public Opinion on
  - (i) Improvement in governance
  - (ii) Feedback on economic policies
  - (iii) Support of unprivileged masses
  - (iv) Review of government performance
  - (v) Check on promises made by government
  - (vi) Relations with other States
  - (vii) Participation in war
  - (viii) State narrative to control masses
  - (ix) Accountability process and control of corruption
- (f) Ignoring Public Opinion may lead to:
  - (i) Poor performance on governance
  - (ii) Unrepresentative credential of government
  - (iii) Spread of extremism and hopelessness
  - (iv) Lack of accountability on key policies
- (g) Steps needed to encourage Public Opinion as a power
  - (i) Spread of literacy and public awareness
  - (ii) Use of democratic means to raise objections
  - (iii) Elimination of fake news and its spread
  - (iv) Rational use of mass media
  - (v) Public opinion to support government policies
- (h) Conclusion



**(14)**

## **STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM**

### **OUTLINES**

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Islam accords equal rights to woman
- (c) Islam doesn't treat woman as a lesser being
- (d) Islam doesn't treat woman as a sexual object
- (e) Islam wants woman to be pious
- (f) Islam treats woman with respect
- (g) Islam gives woman property and ownership rights
- (h) Islam gives woman choice to lead life on her own terms
- (i) Islam gives woman right to choose for marriage
- (j) Islam gives woman right to obtain separation in marriage
- (k) Islam makes man responsible for upkeep of wife
- (l) Islam gives woman right to pursue any goal
- (m) Islam doesn't consign woman to any cleric ship
- (n) Islam gives her right to participate in political, economic and social affairs
- (o) Islam encourages woman for different leadership roles
- (p) Conclusion

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## GLOBALIZATION AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA OUTLINES

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Globalization has spread rapidly due to:
  - (i) Opening of communication channels
  - (ii) Cheap availability of Internet
  - (iii) Integration of financial markets
  - (iv) Rapid development of international banks, WTO and IMF
  - (v) Unequal development of financial hubs in different countries
  - (vi) Expansion of services sector and increase in outreach of businesses
  - (vii) World becoming a global village and information technology revolution
  - (viii) Sophisticated development of travel, airline and tourism industry
  - (ix) Interdependence of financial markets on international trade
  - (x) Launch of e-commerce, e-payment channels and remote control monitoring
- (c) Electronic media instrumental in the spread of globalization
  - (i) Spread through cable TV, Netflix and Youtube
  - (ii) Spread through social media networks like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook
  - (iii) Presence of news media, businesses and state officials on social networks
- (d) Globalization during the corona pandemic
  - (i) Manufacturing and services sectors hit severely
  - (ii) Decrease in global production output
  - (iii) Travel, airline and tourism industry hit badly
  - (iv) Businesses have remodelled themselves by working from home
  - (v) Food services business hit badly
  - (vi) Globalization has not been hurt
  - (vii) Electronic media played a positive role
  - (viii) Electronic media spread awareness about the pandemic
  - (ix) Financial markets and services hurt by corona but didn't collapse
  - (x) Globalization now a permanent need of world
- (e) Conclusion